

.. THE ..  
GROUNDWORK  
OF BRITISH  
.. HISTORY ..  
WARNER & MARTEN







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Satya Vrat Shastri

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Satya Vrat Shastri







# THE GROUNDWORK OF BRITISH HISTORY

BY

GEORGE TOWNSEND WARNER, M.A.

Sometime Fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge  
late Master of the Modern Side in Harrow School

AND

C. H. K. MARTEN, M.A.

Balliol College, Oxford  
Vice-Provost of Eton College

*Satya Vrat Shastri*

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# The Groundwork of British History

BY

GEORGE TOWNSEND WARNER, M.A.

AND

C. H. K. MARTEN, M.A.

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## PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION

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In giving the name *The Groundwork of British History* to this book, the writers seek to make clear the plan on which it is constructed.

If in reading it a boy comes to carry with him some idea of the origin and sequence and relation of events, and gains some notion of history *as a whole*, he is beginning to build on what may be called a groundwork. Much will remain to be learnt and many details to be added, but these will fall naturally into their places if the mind is already prepared with a groundwork or general plan on which to fit them.

If, on the other hand, there is no such groundwork in his mind, additional knowledge may merely produce additional confusion. Every teacher in history is only too familiar with the painful method of "learning"—so called—by which a boy will get up some pages of a book so thoroughly as to be able to answer every question on the pages set, and yet have no grip of his history as a whole. Take him "outside the lesson" and he is at once bewildered and lost—with perhaps a suppressed sense of injustice.

Such a perplexed learner often deserves more sympathy than he gets. He dutifully burdens his memory with all the names and dates and facts which he finds on the pages prescribed, not knowing which are the most important, not having been taught to connect events with their past causes or their future developments. Now and again his memory, being unsupported by any general sense of *where he is*, plays him false, and he produces those grotesque onslaughts upon chronology and probability with which we are all acquainted.

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## PREFACE

It is to meet such difficulties that our book is directed. Our aim is to provide the reader with a groundwork at once solid and broad-based, upon which increasing knowledge may gradually be built; to trace out the main threads of British history, omitting small and unfruitful details; to treat events in logical sequence by pursuing one subject at a time; and to concentrate the mind upon what was the chief policy or course of action in each age.

In order to do this the book strives to encourage the faculties of understanding and reason rather than mere memory; and to make boys think why things happened and what the consequences were.

The method is the same as that followed in Mr. Warner's *Brief Survey of British History*, but the book is intended for those who have got beyond the elementary outlines, and who require a general view of the broadening stream of our national history.

In the end be it said that, while the two writers have worked as far as possible together, the grouping and writing of the first part to the year 1603 is Mr. Warner's; from 1603 to the end is Mr. Marten's.

Mr. Marten would like to thank Mr. Urquhart, Fellow and Tutor of Balliol College, and Mr. G. W. Headlam, his colleague at Eton, for kindly reading the proof sheets, and the Rev. A. B. Beaven, of Leamington, and Professor Hearnshaw for providing valuable lists of *corrigenda*.

## NOTE TO EDITION OF 1932

The whole book has been revised in the light of recent historical research. Up till 1815 it has been found possible to keep to the original paging, but it has been found impossible after that date, as the later chapters have had to be largely rewritten. The book has been brought up to the year 1932. Mr. Marten wishes to express his grateful thanks for help in revision to Dr. R. R. Reid, and to his late colleagues Mr. R. Birley and Mr. Hugh de Havilland, and to Mr. J. G. Fyfe for help in the Scottish sections.



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## Part I

# FROM THE COMING OF THE ROMANS TO THE UNION OF THE CROWNS

BY

GEORGE TOWNSEND WARNER, M.A.







# PART I

---

## I. The Romans in Britain

55 B.C.—A.D. 410

The invasions of Julius Cæsar are generally taken as a suitable point from which to begin the history of our land, because Cæsar's own writings give us the earliest records that are of much value in an historical sense. It is true that there were earlier visitors. Posidonius of Rhodes came to Britain some sixty years before Cæsar, and long before him a Marseilles merchant, named Pytheas, bringing a fleet northwards in search of tin and amber, somewhere about 330 B.C., had landed in Kent and spent some months there. But both he and Posidonius were mere travellers, and, though they gathered a little about the customs of the inhabitants, they say nothing of their history.

One of the great differences, however, that mark off the first six hundred years of our history from what comes after, lies in this very fact that we have very few written records; and even the records which tell of the Roman occupation do not say much about the sort of people who dwelt in our island in these early days. Fortunately there is another source of information. Those who study races and languages can say something about the people; and from what these primitive people left behind them—their ornaments, weapons, and household implements—antiquarians can judge of their ways of living and fighting.

The people with whom Cæsar came in contact were Celts.



They were a kindred people to the Gauls with whom he had battled on the other side of the channel—indeed, **“British” and Gaelic.** it was to hinder them giving help to their Continental brethren that Cæsar made his expeditions. Their language, “British,” a Celtic tongue, parent of modern Welsh, was dominant over Britain. Gaelic, another branch of Celtic, still spoken in the Scottish Highlands, was the language of Ireland, and was brought to Scotland at a later time by Scots settlers from Ireland.

Cæsar’s first expedition (55 B.C.) did little more than show him that the task he had undertaken was more difficult than he imagined. He was in the country for a very short time. In the next year he came with a larger force, **Cæsar in Britain, 55-54 B.C.** landed in Kent, and moved northwards. Cassivellaunus, chief of the Catuvellauni, strove to unite the British tribes in a resistance, but they were not trustworthy. One tribe, the Trinobantes, thought it prudent to join the side of the invaders. Cæsar’s legions stormed the British camp near St. Albans, and Cassivellaunus offered to submit. Caesar, whose only object was to impress on the Britons the idea that the arm of Rome could reach far, accepted the submission, and withdrew his troops.

For close on a hundred years Britain was left to itself. In A.D. 43 the Emperor Claudius sent another expedition. By this time the policy of the Empire had changed. **Conquest of Britain.** Cæsar’s expedition had been punitive; that is to say, its object had been to deter the Britons from disturbing the borders of the Empire. Great Britain has often made similar expeditions against the tribes on the Indian frontier. But just as has often happened in India, a punitive expedition is the forerunner of conquest. The design of Claudius was to add to his own glory by adding Britain to the Empire.

This task was carried on by one Roman officer after another. Aulus Plautius drove Caractacus, son of Cymbeline, into exile, reducing the south-east, and the Emperor Claudius himself made a state visit to the island in order to receive in person the submission of the British Chiefs. Ostorius Scapula carried the Roman arms westwards, defeated and captured the exiled Caractacus, who had made himself leader of the Silures in South



Wales. The Britons still struggled on in North Wales until Suetonius Paulinus drove them backwards into Mona (Anglesea), and in a great battle completely overthrew them. As the Druids had done their best to inflame the Britons against the invaders, they were all slaughtered, and their altars and sacred groves destroyed. The full fruits of this victory could not, however, be gathered, as during the absence of the legions a formidable revolt had broken out in the east. Boadicea, the deposed queen of the Iceni, had been flogged; this roused the indignation of her former subjects, who having had their lands taken from them, and being made to pay heavy taxes, were only too glad of the chance of rising against their oppressors. Rebellion spread fast; Colchester, London, and St. Albans were sacked and burned; all the Roman officials were massacred; the ninth legion was cut to pieces. Suetonius Paulinus hurried back, only just in time. Once again the Roman discipline proved too strong for the Britons to contend against; the rebels were defeated, and Boadicea, seeing that all was lost, poisoned herself. She had, however, brought the Roman power in Britain to the very verge of ruin.

Suetonius Paulinus.

Boadicea.

With the coming of Julius Agricola as governor in 78, we pass from the stage of conquest to the stage of settlement. Not that Agricola had not some stern fighting to do. He had again to penetrate to Anglesea, his light-armed men swimming the straits to reach the enemy. Having struck down Wales, he marched north and overthrew the Caledonians at the battle of the "Graupian Hill", near the River Tay. But he was more than a mere soldier. The Roman historian Tacitus, his son-in-law, speaks of him as knowing that "Conquest can never be secure while it loads the vanquished with injury and oppression". To those who resisted he was ruthless, but he strove by kind treatment to win the love of those who yielded. He made the taxes less oppressive; he arranged that the forced service with the army should be as little burdensome as possible, and in a short time was rewarded with a willing stream of levies; he encouraged the Britons to set up courts of justice, and to build better houses; he did all he could to spread the use of the Roman tongue; he checked plundering

Epoch of Settlement.

Julius Agricola, 78-85.



raids by building a line of forts from the Clyde to the Forth, and by leaving strong garrisons on the Welsh border; in short, he did all that was possible to bring to the Britons that peace which was usual in a well-ordered Roman province.

The process of "Romanizing" Britain, which Agricola began, was carried on by his successors. The condition of the people improved. Peace brought prosperity. The Roman roads which were stretched over the face of the country served to convey more than Roman legions. The chief ones deserve notice. The Watling Street ran from Dover to London, and thence to Wroxeter; the Ermine Street ran from London to Lincoln, and thence to York with branches going to Carlisle and Newcastle; the Fosse-way went from Lincoln through Leicester, Cirencester, and Bath to Ilchester, Axminster, and Exeter; another road went from London to Silchester, whence branches went on through Winchester and Salisbury. A busy trade sprang up. To get plenty of <sup>Corn</sup> Growing. corn, and get it cheap, was always an important object in Roman policy; it was needed for the troops in the island, for the Roman camps on the German frontier, and for the free gifts of corn made to the lazy populace at Rome. Britain was well suited to growing corn. Its fertility was a source of wonder to writers of the time; one speaks of it as "a land wealthy from its heavy crops, its rich pastures, and its veins of metals"; another assures us that on one occasion 800 vessels were sent thither to convey the corn. All agreed that it deserved the title of the "Granary of the North".

Along with this active corn trade came progress in the mining of tin, lead, and copper, in the making of weapons and iron implements, and in industrial arts such as weaving, dyeing, and pottery. Towns sprang up with well-built houses. Numbers of Romans and foreigners settled in Britain. The history of the island flowed on in a fairly peaceful course. Now and again there came a raid from the north or west; now and again an emperor appeared to visit his distant province. Hadrian came in A.D. 119 and built the wall from Solway to Tyne that bears his name. Nearly a hundred years later (A.D. 208) Severus strove to complete the conquest of Caledonia, but died at York. Again a hundred years pass, and we find the

Visits of late  
Emperors.



most interesting connection between Britain and the Roman Empire in the fact that it was from Britain that Constantine, himself the son of a British mother, started on that memorable expedition which was to end in his becoming the first Christian emperor. Again another hundred years, and Rome, struggling with invaders nearer home, had to withdraw her legions from her distant colony. In 410 the Emperor Honorius told the Britons that they were no longer bound to his allegiance.

Henceforth the Britons were to stand or fall alone. Yet the power to stand alone was no longer in them. They had been civilized into an orderly community, and they had copied Roman habits, worn Roman dress, spoken the tongue of their conquerors, dwelt in Roman villas, bathed in Roman baths, tasted Roman luxury. But they had not absorbed the qualities that had made Rome great. They had leaned on the might of Rome, till they had lost some of the rough vigour and love of independence that had marked Boadicea and Caractacus; and when deserted by the power that had first tamed and then protected them, they were to fall a prey to the fierce invaders who were pressing westwards.

Effects of  
 Roman  
 Civilization.  
 Weakness of  
 the Britons.

## II. The Saxon Invaders

The story of the Roman occupation is interesting historically, but it is not important. It is a thing by itself: it bore no fruit in the future. In France and Spain, for example, the effects of the Roman occupation lasted on and have made deep marks on their history. The very language of these countries is descended from the tongue of their conquerors. But in Britain what the Romans did perished after they left. Our language and our institutions are Saxon. It is therefore with the coming of the Saxons that the continuous history of our country begins. Since that time there have been many changes but no violent break.



The Britons did not remain long unmolested. Raids of Picts from the north and Scots from Ireland grew more and more frequent, and a new terror was added by the appearance of Jute and Saxon sea rovers from the shores of Germany and Frisia. An appeal for help was made to Aëtius, the Roman commander in Gaul: it bears the pathetic title of "The Groans of the Britons"; they prayed Aëtius to deliver them, "for", said they, "the barbarians drive us to the sea and the sea drives us back to the barbarians". No help, of course, came from Aëtius, who had his hands full with the Huns, and the British ruler, Vortigern, in despair hired a band of Jutes to war against the Picts.

This was a copy of Roman policy, but it was an unsuccessful copy. Rome, until later days, could keep her mercenaries in order; Vortigern could not. The Jutes turned against him, and under their leaders, who, as legend says, bore the names of Hengist and Horsa, seized on the island of Thanet, from which the Britons could not expel them. The Saxon conquest had begun. More than a hundred and fifty years were to pass before it was complete.

Starting from Thanet the Jutish conquest spread along the coast of Kent. Fresh hordes came over to aid their comrades; Vortigern and the Britons were driven back; the fortified towns along the shore were starved into surrender. Twenty years saw Kent completely conquered.

A few years later a band of Saxons overran Sussex, giving the land their name; while another force, starting from Southampton, fought their way inland and occupied what is now Hampshire, but was called after them Wessex. A fourth band appeared off the mouth of the Thames and seized Essex. Another tribe—the Angles—descended on what has been called from them East Anglia,<sup>1</sup> and spread farther north over the coast of Lincolnshire to the Humber mouth.

The process of conquest was slow; it was not done by large forces working in combination. The country was reft from the

<sup>1</sup> It is perhaps scarcely necessary to point out that as Sussex is the land of the South Saxons, so Essex, Wessex, and Middlesex are the lands of the East, West, and Middle Saxons, while Norfolk and Suffolk are the north and south folk of the Angles.



Britons piecemeal. Each set of invaders came, coveted land, and had to press farther into the country, or along the coast, to get it. The fortune of war wavered. At Mount Badon, in 520, the West Saxons met with a crushing defeat which checked their advance for years, but on the whole the Britons lost ground steadily. The fighting was fierce; neither side spared the other; step by step, as the Saxons advanced, the Britons who were left alive withdrew. Few stayed to be slaves to the victors. Indeed between Britons and Saxons there could be no peace; year after year saw the Britons squeezed, first into the centre of the country, and then by degrees steadily westwards: the Britons were falling back towards the mountainous country where they had fought their last fight against the Romans.

Gradual  
Nature of  
Conquest.

Two battles are usually taken as marking the end of the Saxon conquest. These are the battle of Deorham in 577 and the battle of Chester in 613. Of course it is not true to say that with them fighting between Briton and Saxon comes to an end. Nor were the "Welsh", as the Saxons termed the Britons, subdued. Nearly another seven centuries had to pass before this was accomplished, but after these two battles there was no longer any question of which power was dominant in England. There was no hope of the Britons recovering their lost ground. Consequently these two battles deserve especial notice.

The victory of Deorham was won by the West Saxons under their King Ceawlin. The site of the battle is not far from Gloucester, and as a fruit of it, that city with Bath and Cirencester fell into Saxon hands. Yet the importance of the battle lies not in the extent of the conquest nor in the richness of the plunder, but in its locality. It gave the Saxons command of the Severn mouth, and so cut the Welsh of Wales off from the Welsh of the South-west of Britain. Precisely the same work was done in the north by the battle of Chester: this was won by an Anglian king, Ethelfrith of Northumbria, who, after hurling back an invasion of Picts at Dawstone near Jedburgh, fought his way westwards. The Welsh mustered all their forces against him. Two thousand monks came from the monastery of Bangor-

Battle of  
Deorham,  
577.

Battle of  
Chester,  
613.



iscoed to pray for victory while the "Comrades"<sup>1</sup> fought. Ethelfrith was victorious, and remorselessly slew the monks, just as Suetonius Paulinus had massacred the Druids. "Whether they bear arms or no," said he, "they fight against us when they pray to their God." As by Deorham the Saxons won the Severn line, so Chester gave them the Dee. The Welsh were again divided. The men of Wales were split off from their kinsmen in Lancashire and Cumberland.

Little surprise need be felt that the Britons preferred to flee for refuge to the hills of the west rather than, by submitting, to live on in their old homes. In their eyes the Saxon was a barbarian, speaking an outlandish tongue and worshipping heathen gods.

Yet, barbarians though they were, the Saxons are of great interest to us, for their language has become ours, and amongst them were germs of some political institutions and ideas that are our own peculiar pride to-day.

Tacitus, who tells us of their ways when they were still living in their homes in Germany, more than three hundred years before the first of them set foot in England, makes much of their freedom. Doubtless he did so because he wished to sharpen a contrast between what he regarded as "degenerate Rome" and the "noble savage". But he did not invent the account he gives. Hence he is a good enough authority for things existing among them, though it is true that by the time the Saxons were established in England, many of these institutions had decayed, and as kings throve liberties disappeared.

In origin, then, the Saxons had thought a good deal of freedom. They kept some slaves, but did not depend on them to do the bulk of their work, as the Athenians and later Romans did. They drove out the Britons from their lands, and, in the main, tilled them for themselves, though doubtless as the invasion went further west more Britons survived, and the race-blood was more mixed.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The name which the Welsh had taken for themselves was *Kynry*, or Comrades. The name also survives in *Cumberland*.

<sup>2</sup> The Saxons settled down in families; this is shown by their place-names. The syllable *-ing* in a place-name denotes kindred. Thus Wokingham, Nottingham, Billingshurst, Wellington, all indicate that the original settlers in these each traced descent back to a common ancestor. Further, the common terminations *ham* and *ton* stand for "home" and "town", the enclosure which served perhaps as a fortification, and in any case



They had also deep-rooted in their nature the love of governing themselves by an assembly. In these assemblies—"folk-moots", meetings of the people—all grave matters were discussed, leaders were elected, questions of peace and war were decided. Yet we are told "no man dictated; he might persuade but he could not command". If the tribesmen agreed, they shook their spears, or clashed them on their shields; if not, they were not slow to express disapproval by loud shouts. It was, in rude shape, a government for the people by the people. And this is not unlike the aim of our present constitution.

The Folk-moot.

Folk-moots decayed as kingdoms grew. By degrees, as England became united, and the petty Saxon Kingdoms were changed into Shires, the folk-moots became "shire-moots", courts in which suits were heard and justice was done before the Ealdorman (the Shire officer), the Sheriff (*Shire-reeve*, the King's officer), the Bishop (the Church officer), and the representative men of the Shire. And below the shires were smaller divisions, the Hundred and the Township (the latter of which still survives as the parish), each with its hundred moot or township moot. Here again we must notice another mark of our national character, the love of managing our own law courts. It is true that the Saxons did not use a "jury" to declare a verdict, but the plan whereby justice was done in each division before the representative men of the division is something of the same nature. It was a refusal to allow justice to belong to the king alone, or to any set of officials, since justice is the common property of the people. And then, further, when we look at this set of assemblies, one below the other, we are reminded that the policy of the Government in our own day has been to revive something of the same kind, to set up County Councils, District

to mark off its inhabitants. A third Saxon ending, which takes the form of *bury*, *burgh*, *borough*, is derived from the *burh*, or more elaborate entrenchment with a mound and a ditch. Hosts of examples occur, such as Bury St. Edmunds, and Edinburgh (Edwin's ditch). These should be contrasted with Roman place-names, usually distinguishable by the termination *-castra*, *-chester*, or *-castra* (Latin, *castra*, a camp), such as Tadcaster, Winchester, Gloucester; or *coln* (Latin, *colonia*, a colony), such as Lincoln. British place-names are rare in England, but are generally connected with the names of their gods. As we approach Danish times we shall also have to note their place-names, of which the commonest ending is "by", e.g. Derby, Whitby, Selby.

(c 271)

2-3\*



Councils, Parish Councils, to enlarge local government, to encourage people to manage their local affairs themselves.

Folk-moots were indeed a sort of primitive governing assembly, though they were doubtless disorderly gatherings where

every freeman thought he had a right to air his own noisy opinion. But these general meetings are only

The Witan. possible for small tribes; kings will employ a council of picked men, more manageable and orderly. So grew up the Assembly of the Wise Men or the Witan, the body from which our Parliament has by slow degrees developed. In it sat the "ealdormen", the rulers of the shires, and the "thegns", or chiefs of the king's bodyguard, who were the nobles and great men of the time; and when the Church was established in England, the archbishops and bishops took their places there also. This body more resembled the House of Lords than Parliament as a whole, for there were no commons to represent the people. Still, it had some of the powers which Parliament wields now. It made laws; it was consulted about affairs of state, on questions of peace and war, of treaties, of religion; it could elect a king; it could depose a king. Under a strong king it was mainly a consultative body. But when a king was feeble, or when the succession was in doubt, it could interfere.

And so, when in later days we find Parliament refusing to allow Charles I to make laws and govern at his will; or interfering in questions of religion, as it did in Henry VIII's days; or offering the crown of England, as it did to William III; or deposing a king, as it did Richard II; we may remember that it was only using powers which had in some degree belonged to the Witan. For most of these acts there are parallels in Saxon times. Edwin of Northumbria's Witan was consulted as to whether Christianity should be adopted; it was the Witan that placed on the throne Canute and Harold; it was the Witan that declared the incapable Ethelred the Unready deposed from the throne.

Tacitus tells us that the Germans had no kings; but even if some bands of Saxons were without kings when they settled in England, it is certain that kings very soon became general. The title King (Cyning), which is probably

Kings.



connected with "kin", shows us that the man stood as the head of his race or kindred. His chief duty was at first to lead the people in war, and accordingly no child could make an efficient king. Hence the office was not strictly hereditary. When a king died, if his eldest son was of sufficient age and a suitable man he would be made king to succeed his father; but if not, some capable man who was "kin" to the late ruler would be chosen. A brother was often made king instead of a son. For example, Alfred himself was not the direct heir. His elder brother Ethelred left sons, but Alfred was put on the throne in preference.

Kings, once made, rapidly acquired great power. One cause lay in the union of the smaller kingdoms, till at last all England came under the sway of one house, the Kings of Wessex. Another source of strength, however, came from the "Gesiths". When there was need the whole mass of the people turned out to fight; a general levy of this kind was called the "Fyrd". But besides the "fyrd" there was a special set of men, the "gesiths", who bound themselves by an oath to fight for the chief. They were his war band, his bodyguard; he was their lord, their bread-giver; they dwelt in his hall, shared his booty, and lived on food of his giving. To the "fyrd" war was an occasional necessity, to the "gesith" it was the business of life. As the chiefs became kings, the "gesiths" also grew more powerful. They were called by a new name—"thegns"; they formed a sort of nobility, not of birth, but of service; and speedily became more important than the *athelings* (descendants of the royal blood) and *eorls* (men of noble birth). They held places in the Witan; they were the king's councillors; they held grants of king's land; and just as the king, by growing in power, had raised their position, so they in their turn helped to exalt the position of the king.

Summing up these matters in more technical terms: the Saxons were a people with strong ideas of liberty and a dislike of absolute government; they had kings, but the power of these was limited partly by custom, partly by an Assembly which took a great share in the government; succession to the throne was not strictly hereditary; justice was "popular", and the sphere



of local government was large. How much modern England has developed along Saxon lines may be judged by reading in the preceding sentence the words "the English are" instead of "the Saxons were". The description applies to our time as to theirs.

It is convenient to give this account of the chief Saxon institutions here at the outset, since an understanding of them will be valuable in what comes later. But it should not be thought that all of them as described here were in use among the Saxons on their arrival. The kings amassed their powers gradually; shires could not exist till the smaller kingdoms were joined into larger ones; the Witan developed as the king needed its counsels, when his kingdom became large and the distance too great for all the warriors to assemble. Political institutions are generally of slow growth and slow decay, and we must picture some growing and others decaying during the course of events which we have next to follow.

### III. The Coming of Christianity

Although little is known of the way in which the Britons had been converted to Christianity under the Roman rule, yet there is no doubt that many of them had become Christians. We hear of Alban, the first man to die for the Christian faith in England, who gave his name to St. Albans, and of three British bishops who visited a Council at Arles in 314. Indeed, when the Roman Emperor Constantine accepted Christianity, it was natural that it should be adopted in Britain. Not the least terrible thing about the Saxons in British eyes was that they were heathens. Britain, as a Christian Roman province, had felt itself a part of Europe; when it was overwhelmed by hordes of savage pagans it sank back into outer darkness. Its history, its religion, its life seemed all alike to have been swallowed up in the wave of invasion. Nothing shows more clearly the horror and loathing which the

Christianity  
under the  
Romans.



Britons felt for the Saxons than the fact that for so many years they made no attempt to convert them. It was not that there were no British missionaries: David preached in South Wales; St. Patrick converted Ireland; St. Ninian spread the Gospel in Galloway; St. Kentigern (Mungo) laboured in Strathclyde, with Cathures (now Glasgow) as his centre, and spent many years in Wales where he founded a monastery at St. Asaph; St. Columba built the great monastery in Iona, whence for centuries flowed a stream of missionary enterprise which in the reign of Oswald reached Northumbria and Christianized the North of England (see p. 15). St. Cuthbert, too, was of the Church of Columba.

What they left undone, Rome did. Everyone knows how the first impulse was supplied; how the little fair-haired boys from Deira attracted the notice of the abbot Gregory in the slave market at Rome; how he declared they were "not Angles, but Angels", fit to be rescued from "the wrath"<sup>1</sup> to come; and vowed, when he heard the name of their king, Ælla, that "Alleluia shall be sung in the realm of Ælla". Years passed by, and Gregory, now made Pope, was able to keep his promise. It happened that King Ethelbert of Kent had married Bertha, a Christian princess from France. Gregory seized the chance thus offered to him. He sent Augustine, with forty followers, to preach the Gospel in England. They landed in the year 597 at Ebbsfleet, the very landing place to which, many years before, the first band of Jutes had come. A fresh Roman conquest was to begin; this time, however, it was not to be made by Roman legions for a Roman Emperor, but by Roman missionaries for the Roman Church.

Augustine's  
mission,  
597

Augustine and his followers were monks; they belonged to the order founded in the fifth century by St. Benedict of Nursia. Benedict, while wishing that his monks would set an example of holy lives, did not mean them to be idle. *Laborare est orare*, "to work is to pray", was his maxim for his followers' guidance. Consequently, though Augustine was come to teach the Saxon warriors that there was more serious business in life than fighting and feasting and drinking, they did not incur the contempt which they would have done had the Saxons found them what

<sup>1</sup> In Latin, *De Ira*.



they would have considered idlers, persons who gave up their whole lives to meditation and prayer. And so, though Ethelbert received them with caution—"Your words", he said, "are fair, but they are new, and I cannot yet forsake what I have so long followed"—yet he gave them leave to preach and gain as many

**Conversion of Kent.**

as they could to their religion. The earnest and simple teaching of the monks soon won converts, and amongst them Ethelbert himself. The king bestowed on Augustine a ruined church at Canterbury. Augustine named it "Christ Church"; it thus became, as it has remained, the first church in England—first both in time and in importance. On that site stands now the Cathedral of Canterbury; its Archbishop is the head of the Church of England.

Just as a marriage brought Kent to Christianity, so another marriage carried the faith northward. Ethelbert's daughter, Ethelburga, married Edwin, the powerful King of Northumbria. As the princess was a Christian, it was agreed that she should be free to keep her faith. And with her went a new missionary, Paulinus.

We are told of Edwin that he "commanded all the nations of the English as well as of the Britons save only Kent". He was worth winning as a convert, and Paulinus set to work to win him; his wife besought him; even the far-distant Pope wrote him letters and sent presents. Edwin was moved by their pleading and by what he thought to be the special favours of Heaven which came to him at this time: he escaped from a treacherous attempt to murder him, he won a great victory over the West Saxons, his wife bore him a daughter. He consulted his Witan as to whether they should accept the new faith. One of his councillors spoke to the king a parable, in which he likened the life of man to the swift flight of a sparrow, "flying in at one door and straightway out at another; whilst he is within he is safe from the wintry storm; but after a short space, he immediately vanishes out of your sight into the dark winter from which he had come. So this life of man appears for a short space; but of what went before, or of what is to follow, we are ignorant. If therefore this new doctrine contains something more certain, it seems justly to deserve to be followed." Paulinus

**Conversion of Northumbria.**



was called in to address the Council, and at once persuaded them to become Christians. Coifi, the heathen high priest, was the first to destroy the old idols. Edwin's subjects followed their king's example, and were baptized in thousands.

Edwin no doubt was sincere enough, but the zeal shown by priests like Coifi and sudden wholesale conversions such as those of the Northumbrians did not amount to much. Those who abandon one faith for another so readily are not likely to be very firm in holding to any faith. If a time of persecution comes they will fall away again. This is exactly what happened in Northumbria. Edwin went to war with Penda, King of Mercia, and was slain at Heathfield. Paulinus and Ethelburga fled. Penda was a heathen, and his heathen warriors overran Northumbria. Many of the hasty Northumbrian Christians hastily gave up their Christianity.

This is made clear by the fact that Oswald, who came to the throne some years later, had to get teachers to preach Christianity afresh. This time, however, he got help from a Celtic source. While Penda had been ravaging Northumbria, Oswald had taken refuge among the monks of Iona for whom he conceived a great admiration. Accordingly he now applied to Iona. The first monk who was sent returned saying that the heathen were too stubborn to be converted. "Was it their stubbornness or your harshness?" enquired one of his brother monks named Aidan. "Did you forget to give them the milk first and then the meat?" Aidan was at once chosen to take the other's place. He speedily showed that he would not make the same mistake. By his efforts Northumbria was again converted. It is true that so long as Penda reigned, the new faith was always in danger. He struck down Oswald in battle as he had slain Edwin. Not until Penda himself fell, in 655, by the River Winwaed, near Leeds, was Christianity in Northumbria secure. The old Mercian king had indeed been no savage persecutor of the Christians. "He only hated and scorned", says Bede, "those whom he saw not doing the works of the faith they had received." Yet so long as he was alive, the cause of the old gods was not lost. When he died it perished with him. After that even the Mercians were converted,



and soon the whole island was Christian. Sussex was the last to receive the faith.

A new trouble speedily arose. Some of the Saxons had been converted by Roman missionaries, others by Celtic. Wessex was converted by Birinus from North Italy, East Anglia by a Burgundian, Northumbria and Mercia by Irishmen, Essex and Sussex by Cedd and Wilfrid. All these teachers were striving for the same good end, but unfortunately they themselves were not agreed. The island, though one in faith, seemed likely to be divided in practice.

The difficulty indeed was not a new one. Even Augustine himself had met the British bishops and tried to persuade them to adopt Roman practices, and they had refused. In his time, it was not so serious a matter, since it was the Britons who held to their own practice and the Saxons to the Roman teaching. But when the Saxons became a house divided against themselves there was grave danger. Accordingly in 664 a Synod was held at Whitby to settle the points of difference.

The champion of the Celtic or British practice was Colman, who had come from Iona, and had succeeded Aidan in Northumbria. The chief upholder of the Roman view was Wilfrid, Abbot of Ripon. Wilfrid had been trained in Lindisfarne, Aidan's own monastery, and might have been expected to take Aidan's views. But he had been on a pilgrimage to Rome, and had come back full of zeal for the Roman Church and Roman ways. The two argued it out before King Oswy of Northumbria, who presided at the Synod. The points of difference were not great. The Britons did not keep Easter on the same day as the Romans, they adopted a different tonsure, and had one or two other customs peculiar to themselves. Colman maintained that they should keep to the practices they had learnt from their fathers. Wilfrid urged that the Britons stood alone in their habits, and that all the rest of Christendom followed Rome. At length Oswy asked Colman if the Keys of Heaven had been given to Columba as they had been given to Peter. Colman replied, "No." "Then," said the king—one may presume with a smile on his face—"if Peter is the doorkeeper I will never contradict him, lest when

Synod of  
Whitby,  
664.



I come to the gates there should be none to open them." He decided for Wilfrid and the Roman practice, and the Columban teachers returned to Scotland where, in 710, Nectan, King of the Picts, decided to conform to Roman usage. Shortly afterwards the Scots of Dalriada, and probably the British of Strathclyde, followed his lead.

The great work done by the Columban Church in the conversion of a considerable part of England must not be forgotten, even though in the event the whole country came under the Roman Church. But had England followed the Celtic practice, she would have cut herself off from Rome and the rest of Western Europe, and would have lost touch with the art and learning which emanated from Rome. Wilfrid put the matter in a nutshell: "To fight against Rome", said he, "is to fight against the world." By deciding to accept the Roman view, England came once more into cultural union with Western Europe.

The fruits of Oswy's decision were soon gathered. The archbishopric of Canterbury being vacant, an Englishman was sent to Rome to be consecrated. He died in Rome, however, and the Pope chose as Archbishop a Greek monk, Theodore of Tarsus. Theodore justified the Pope's choice as thoroughly in 668 as we shall see another archbishop justify it in 1206. He set himself to unite the Church into one, and to organize it under bishops, each of whom was to be responsible for his own diocese. In the Celtic Church the monastery had been the centre on which all turned. The abbot was all-powerful, the bishop merely his subordinate, whose chief work lay in ordaining clergy. Hence bishops wandered up and down the land with no settled sphere of authority, and often quarrelling; monasteries, owning no master but their own abbot, divided the church rather than united it. What the results of the Celtic system were may be seen in Ireland, where, in the dark days before the English conquest, the Church fell entirely into the hands of the chiefs, lost its power, and merely gave an example of disunion to a people who already thought more of their own tribe than of their nation. But Theodore by setting up the Roman system with its grades of rank—the priest in the parish, the bishop in the diocese ruling over the priests, the

Theodore  
of Tarsus,  
668.



archbishop in his province ruling over the bishops, and the Pope as the head of all—united the land into one.<sup>1</sup> When all met together in a national synod they no longer thought of themselves as men of Northumbria, Kent, or Wessex, but as members of a United Church.

If we look for the results of the conversion upon our country, the first is here. A united Church gave the example for a united people; union under one archbishop accustomed men to think of union under one king; if they were alike in religion, they might well be alike in law and government. And we shall see that this soon came to pass. Another result was that English missionaries crossed to the continent—St. Wilfrid preached to the Frisians, St. Boniface laboured in Germany, and St. Willibrord carried on Wilfrid's work.

A National Church an example of a United Nation.

The Church offered an example of union; it also offered an example of peace. Among the Saxons men had been chiefly thought of for their valour. Their system of justice was based on the ideas of private vengeance or of fines paid in compensation for wrongs done. When a murder, a theft, or some deed of violence had been committed, the accused person had to be produced by his kindred. If he did not appear he was declared outlawed, and the injured man or his relations could exact what vengeance they pleased, if they found him. If he pleaded that he was innocent, he was required to support his oath by men who would swear to his being an honest man, and one to be believed. These were called *compurgators*. If he could not get sufficient compurgators, he had to go through the *ordeal*, an appeal to the judgment of Heaven. He put his arm into boiling water, or had to walk over red-hot ploughshares or carry a red-hot bar three paces. If within three days the wounds were not clean he was judged guilty. In that event he was dealt with as if he had pleaded guilty; that is to say, he was fined according to his crime. Part went to the king, as a compensation for a breach of the king's peace; part went to the injured man, or, in the case of a murder, to his kindred. The amount of this fine partly depended on the gravity of the injury done, but partly also on the rank of the

Teaching and Example of the Church.

Ordeal.

<sup>1</sup>The work was not completed by Theodore. He, however, began it.



man injured. To kill a thegn was more heinous than to kill a ceorl, and therefore a higher *wergild* had to be paid.

Thus the Saxon conception of justice was bad. It encouraged private vengeance, which only leads to more violence and makes one crime produce many others; it has little idea of a trial, since by the ordeal it threw on Providence or chance the task of deciding guilt, a task which men can perform for themselves; by compurgation it favoured the strong and noble against the poor and simple, since a great man's oath outweighed the oaths of many small men; and, finally, it had practically no idea of a *crime* against the state.

The Church, however, held a loftier view about misdeeds than merely regarding them as wrongs to a person. They were more than wrongs, they were also *sins* on the part of the doer. Theodore and his parish clergy taught that such acts must not only be compensated by fines, but atoned for by repentance and penance; and the penances, consisting of fasting, pilgrimage, and assiduous prayer, acted as very real punishments. Till the penance was discharged the guilty man was outside the pale of the Church and its protection. Thus not only did the penitential system, by adding further punishment, check misdeeds and discourage habits of gluttony, drunkenness, and vice, which the Saxons had hitherto thought excusable or even praiseworthy, but it strengthened the idea that such wrongdoers were offenders against the whole body of the community. When this point is reached we get a much higher standard of justice, in which certain offences are treated as *crimes*, and dealt with by the state as offences against itself.

The Church, then, rebuked vice and punished ill-doers. But rebuke and punishment by themselves were not enough. Had the Church contented itself with merely commanding men to be good, its influence would have been slight. It was necessary to show the way; to teach not only by precept, but by example. This the monks and parish priests did admirably. Their own peaceful and simple lives brought men to see that doing their duty at home was better than seeking adventures abroad; that it was better to forgive an enemy than to overcome him; that a man should strive to be loved rather than feared.



To the Church, too, we owe the beginnings of our learning. The Abbey of Whitby found shelter for a cowherd who had become a monk. This man was Caedmon, the first English poet. His great religious poem seemed to those of his time to be sent direct from heaven. "Others after him strove to compose religious poems, but none could vie with him, for he learnt not the art of poetry from men, or of men, but from God." Bede, another monk—the "Venerable Bede" is the respectful title Bede, d. 735—that has been bestowed on him—is a type of the great teachers whom the Church gave us. "My constant pleasure", he says, "lay in learning, or teaching, or writing." At his school of Jarrow six hundred monks learned from him. He was our first historian; and, indeed, it is he who tells us almost all we know of this time. And yet more than this, he translated into English St. John's Gospel, devoting the last days of his life to the task. He was urged to rest from the work that was killing him, but he refused, saying: "I don't want my boys to read a lie, or to work to no purpose when I am gone." When the last chapter of the Gospel was finished the great scholar died.

Another, and a very different type, from among the men the Church gave us was Dunstan. He, too, was a monk; but while Bede was a scholar, Dunstan was not only a scholar but a statesman also. He was the adviser of two kings, and practically regent for a third; he went with the king on campaigns against the Danes; he kept the royal treasure. As in addition he was Archbishop of Canterbury, we can understand that he was much the most powerful man in the kingdom. He was the first man to be great both as a cleric and as a statesman. But there were many who followed in his steps. In fact, until the reign of Henry VIII, the greatest ministers of our kings were almost always clerics. There were many things that commended them. No cleric could be suspected of aiming at the throne; nor could he found a family, and therefore he was presumably less greedy for lands and honours than a baron, who could leave such things to his son. Again, clerics were far more able and enlightened than the ignorant warriors and nobles who formed the king's court,

**Statesmen:**  
Dunstan,  
Archbishop of  
Canterbury,  
960.



and they did a great work for England. As we shall see later, one of these Church-statesmen, Stephen Langton, had much to do with obtaining for us our Magna Carta.

The Church, then, gave us the beginnings of our national unity; it did much to give us peace at home, and a better sense of what was lawful and right; it gave us scholars, and it gave us statesmen.

#### IV. The Early Kingdoms: Kent, Northumbria, Mercia, and Wessex

The period of Saxon history which ends with the coming to the throne of the West Saxon King Egbert (802), who united all Saxon England under his sway, is sometimes called the period of the *Heptarchy*, the Rule of <sup>The Heptarchy.</sup> the Seven Kingdoms. Seven kingdoms may, indeed, be counted—Northumbria, Wessex, Mercia, Kent, Sussex, Essex, and East Anglia—though even here the description is not satisfactory, for Northumbria itself was made up of two kingdoms, Bernicia and Deira. But the term Heptarchy implies seven kingdoms independent of each other, whereas, in fact, these kingdoms were very rarely quite independent. As we shall see, sometimes one, sometimes another, had a sort of overlordship over the rest. A king who had this overlordship was often called a *Bretwalda*. Yet, again, this title must not be pressed too far. The name Bretwalda seems first to have been taken by Edwin of Northumbria to commemorate his victories over the Welsh. He wished to imitate the Roman rulers, and called himself by a name which translated the old title "Duke of the Britons".<sup>1</sup> Other kings took the name without as much reason as Edwin had, and later writers have applied it as a convenient name for the powerful monarchs whose overlordship was admitted by the other kingdoms. Yet when we read that Edwin of Northumbria was Bretwalda, we must not imagine that the other kingdoms

<sup>1</sup> This is not certain; some think it means "Broad-ruler".



were really subject to him, any more than when we speak of the Heptarchy we must think of them as being quite independent.

Just as the kingdom of Kent under Ethelbert was the first to accept Christianity, so it was the first to exercise an overlordship over the rest. Ethelbert's authority reached as far north as the Humber. He did not conquer the other kingdoms, at least there is no record of his warring against them, but they regarded him as their chief and fought under his banner. He was admitted to be the most important king in England.

The overlordship of Kent was, however, shortlived. It rose with Ethelbert, and fell at his death in 616. From that time the Kings of Northumbria, Mercia, and Wessex in succession were regarded as overlords. It is tempting to wonder why the kingdoms of Anglia, Essex, and Sussex never rose to this position, seeing that the south-eastern part of the country was richer and more fertile than the rest, and had been in Roman days more populous. The answer is probably this. When the Welsh were driven into the west, only the Saxon kingdoms of Northumbria, Mercia, and Wessex, who still had to hold their borders against them, remained good fighting men. The rest, being less disturbed by wars, settled down to the arts of peace. They may have grown richer, but they grew weaker. The battle was not in those days to the wealthy, but to the strong.

Again, as Christianity passed from Kent to Northumbria, so also did the overlordship of England. Ethelric had formed Northumbria, Northumbria by uniting Bernicia (Lothian and 616-685. Northumberland) and Deira (Yorkshire and Durham) in 588. Ethelfrith, his son, had, as we have seen, won the battle of Chester in 613, and had driven thereby a wedge of Saxon power between the Welsh of Wales and Strathclyde. Great as Ethelfrith was, he was defeated and killed by a usurper, a son of the man whom Ethelric had driven from the throne of Deira when he added it to his own Bernician realm. Yet this usurper became even more powerful than Ethelfrith. He was Edwin the Bretwalda.

Part of Edwin's career is already familiar. We have seen that he married Ethelburga of Kent, and that Paulinus converted



him to Christianity. This, however, falls in the second half of his reign. In the ten years before his conversion he gathered such a power as never had been wielded by any man in England before him. He had driven the Picts north of the Forth, and he reigned, nominally at least, over the whole area between the Forth and the Trent. He had also forced the Strathclyde Welsh to the west of the Yorkshire hills, and had launched on the Irish Sea a fleet which won for him the Isle of Man and Anglesea, the latter bearing a commemorative name, "the Isle of the Angles". A standard and a spear topped with a tuft of feathers, the old sign of Roman power, was carried before him. Secure towards the north and west, he turned southwards; Mercians and East Angles bowed before him; his marriage with Ethelburga won the alliance of Kent; the only kingdom that still resisted was Wessex. The West Saxons sent envoys to make terms. At the meeting, one of them, thinking to free his country by a treacherous stroke, rushed at Edwin to murder him; but Lilla, one of Edwin's thegns, threw himself in the way, and, by receiving the sword in his own body, saved his master. In the war that followed the West Saxons were beaten, and had, like the rest, to take Edwin as overlord.

That this great king had become a Christian no doubt helped the cause of Christianity in England, but his Christianity did not help Edwin. All who remained heathen were set against him, and when Edwin accepted a religion that preached peace rather than a sword, his foes thought he was growing weak and unwarlike. An alliance was formed against him by Penda, the heathen King of Mercia, who, calling in to his aid Cadwallon, King of Gwynedd (the Snowdonian district of Wales), overcame Edwin's army at Heathfield<sup>1</sup> in 633. Edwin fell in the battle.

The period that follows is a long struggle between Northumbria and Mercia, in which the latter gradually triumphed. After the battle of Heathfield, Penda wrested the supremacy of East Anglia from the Northumbrians and added it to the kingdom which he had gradually got together in the Midlands, and so long as he was alive Northumbria found him a formidable enemy. Oswald, who succeeded to Edwin's throne

Rise of  
Mercia.

<sup>1</sup> Hatfield in Yorkshire



## THE EARLY KINGDOMS

in 635, leagued himself with Wessex against the Mercian, but Penda beat them at Maserfield in 642. For some years the Northumbrian power was prostrated by a struggle between kings who represented the rival houses of Bernicia and Deira. Oswy at length united the two, and finally revenged the misfortunes of his house by overthrowing Penda at Winwaedfield, perhaps a place on the Aire near Leeds, in 655.

With Penda fell heathendom; but the cause of Mercia survived. Just as Northumbria had been weakened by being the one Christian country in the midst of heathen foes, so Mercia was strengthened by abandoning the old religion which had separated her from the rest. Three years after Penda's death, his son once more threw off the yoke of Northumbria, and Oswy could not subdue him. Indeed the days of Northumbrian greatness were drawing to an end. Yet the last days were almost the brightest. Egfrith, who came to the throne in 670, conquered the Strathclyde Welsh, and added Cumbria as far north as Carlisle to his dominions. He grasped, however, at a still wider power, and led an army north of the Forth. During his absence an uneasy dread lay on Northumbria. St. Cuthbert, Abbot of Lindisfarne, was at the time at Carlisle. He shared the anxiety of the people. "Let us watch and pray," said he to some questioner. The fears were justified. While St. Cuthbert was praying at Carlisle, Egfrith and his army were cut to pieces by the Picts in the battle of Nectansmere. With this defeat the Northumbrian power fell for ever.

Nectans-  
mere, 685.

For more than a hundred years Mercia held the overlordship which Northumbria had lost. She had, it is true, many struggles with Wessex, but on the whole kept the advantage.

Mercian  
supremacy  
685-796.

At first Ini, King of Wessex, seemed likely to unite and extend Wessex into a kingdom too strong for Mercia to overcome, but in 726, when Ini was absent on a pilgrimage to Rome, Ethelbald, King of Mercia, seized the chance to invade Wessex, and by 733 had subdued it. The Mercian overlordship lasted for twenty years, till the West Saxons rose and

Offa,  
757-96.

defeated Ethelbald at Burford. Under Ethelbald's successor, Offa, Mercian power rose to its zenith. He overcame Kent and Essex, advanced the Mercian frontier to the



Thames, pushed back the Welsh, and built the great rampart, "Offa's dyke", from the Dee to the Wye, to confine them within narrower limits. He persuaded Pope Hadrian to make Lichfield the see of an archbishop, so that Mercian Christians should not be under the rule of Canterbury. He corresponded on terms of equality with the most powerful monarch of the time, the Emperor Charlemagne. Yet his power was no more secure than that of Edwin, or Oswy, or Egfrith. When he died, Mercian supremacy crumbled away.

The story of the rise and fall, first of Northumbria and then of Mercia, is apt to seem tiresome. After battles and conquests there is nothing permanent to show for it all. One fabric, laboriously raised, tumbles to the ground, and nothing is left but confused ruins. Then another is begun only to collapse like its predecessor. We shall now have to follow the building up of a third power, that of Wessex. This time, however, it is more interesting because it proved permanent.

We have seen from time to time a little of the early history of Wessex. The West Saxons were certainly the most powerful kingdom in the south. Twice they had seemed to be on the verge of great things, first when Ceawlin won the victory of Dèorham, and again when Ini conquered Somerset, Sussex, and Kent, thus becoming master of all England south of the Thames. But Ceawlin was checked by quarrels at home, and the West Saxon power had been overshadowed by the growth of Northumbria, while Ini was compelled to yield to Ethelbald of Mercia. Offa's death, however, gave a fresh opportunity; and with the hour came the man.

Egbert had already made one attempt on the West Saxon throne, but the influence of Offa had been too strong for him. He had taken refuge with Charlemagne, and had no doubt learnt at that monarch's splendid court the value of a united realm, and something of the art of ruling one. In 802 the West Saxons offered him the crown. The growth of his power was rapid. He subdued the Welsh of Cornwall, defeated the Mercians at Ellandun in 825, tore from them the kingdoms of Kent, Sussex, and Essex, which they had held subject, and two years later, invading Mercia itself, made the Mercians accept him as overlord.

Wessex.

Egbert,  
802-839.



His name was now so great that Northumbria submitted to a mere threat. Thus before his death in 839, although he did not actually displace the Kings of Mercia, Northumbria, and East Anglia, he was ruler of the whole country.<sup>1</sup>

So far there is nothing to suggest to us that the overlordship of Wessex will differ from those of Mercia or Northumbria. We may expect to see it fall, as they fell. Indeed on Egbert's death we may fancy that we see the fall beginning: Wessex goes to one son, Ethelwulf; Kent, Essex, and Sussex are given to another son, Athelstan. Disunion appears close at hand. Yet there was a new factor in English politics. Efforts at union had hitherto failed, because so soon as one kingdom became great, it was the interest of the rest to pull it down. Such union as there was must be union of force, not of hearts. Ever since the Welsh had been tamed, England had lacked the strongest motive towards union, namely, the presence of a powerful foreign foe. In Egbert's reign this foreign foe was already thundering at the gates. England had to face the invasions of the Danes.

## V. Alfred and the Danes

Traditionally we are accustomed to think of Alfred and the Danes together. The name of the great hero-king at once raises in our minds the memory of a desperate struggle between the English and the invading sea rovers. Yet we must be on our guard lest we make too much of this. The Danes had begun to harass England long before Alfred's day; and though Alfred certainly checked their conquests for a time, he did not in any sense end the struggle. His sons and grandsons had to carry on his work, and even after their time the trouble broke out afresh. Indeed for nearly two hundred years English history is

<sup>1</sup> The spread of Christianity over Saxon England and the changes of the overlordship follow nearly the same course. If on a map of England a "horse-shoe" line be drawn, starting in Kent and travelling through *Essex*, *East Anglia*, Northumbria, Mercia, Wessex, back to *Sussex*, this traces the course of Christianity, save that Wessex was converted before Mercia; omitting the kingdoms in italics it also traces the "overlordship".



full of the Danes, plundering, fighting, conquering and being conquered, rebelling against their Saxon rulers, and at last reaching their final triumph when a Danish king, Canute, rules England. Of these two hundred years it is plain that the reign of Alfred can only occupy a small part. None the less, it is a distinguished part.

Again, though Alfred was great as a leader against the Danes, it is only a small part of his greatness. There were many stout warriors among the Saxon kings, but only one Alfred. <sup>Alfred's greatness.</sup> Had he never fought a battle he would yet have deserved a place among the greatest rulers of the world. He was the first English king who gave up his whole life to the welfare of his country. Other kings had regarded their kingship largely as a position to be used for their own pleasure and ambition. Alfred treated his solely as a duty which he owed to his people. He was not content to be merely a king; he was a father to his fatherland, a servant to his own subjects.

Before Alfred could carry out any of his schemes of good government it was needful that the country should be at peace, and no peace was possible until the Danes were overcome. The Danes, then, were his first task.

Precisely the same cause which had brought the Saxons on the Britons was now driving the Danes on the Saxons. The Danes, as we are in the habit of calling them, did not come from Denmark alone, but from all North Ger- <sup>Danish invasion.</sup> many, Scandinavia, and all the coasts of the North Sea. If we call them not Danes, but Northmen, we are reminded that they did not raid England only, but the north of France too, and gave their name to the province of Normandy. They went still farther afield, however. They made a settlement in South Italy, twice attacked Constantinople, conquered Iceland, sailed from there to Greenland, and even reached the coast of America centuries before Columbus. In this restless career of adventure, driven from their homes by the same pressure of westward-moving races which had urged the barbarians against the Roman Empire and the Saxons into Britain, we may find repeated the same stages of progress which had marked the Saxon invasion.



The first object was plunder; the second stage, settlement; the final stage, conquest.

The year 789 saw the first Danish raid into England; on the eastern coasts fell the earliest gusts of the coming storm; since the Danes were heathen they had no scruple in sacking the rich monasteries of Lindisfarne and Wearmouth. As time went on the raids became more numerous, the raiders more daring. Egbert was beaten in 828, but in 837 he won a victory at Hengist's Down. Yet one victory was of little use. In the course of the next three years every summer brought a fresh horde of plunderers, and London, Rochester, and Canterbury were all pillaged.

The middle of the ninth century saw the Danish invasions passing from the first to the second stage. In 851 some Danes, instead of returning home, wintered in Sheppey. This example was soon followed. In 866 an army, greater than any of its predecessors, landed in East Anglia. The next year it ravaged Northumbria; then it advanced into Mercia; checked there, it returned to East Anglia, and slew King Edmund, whose name is commemorated in Bury St. Edmunds. The year 871 saw it again push southwards into Wessex. If Wessex fell, the Danes would be indeed masters of England.

It was this crisis that Alfred had to face. His grandfather, Egbert, had died in 839, leaving a son, Ethelwulf, who had reigned till 858. He left behind him four sons, of whom Alfred was the youngest. By 866 the two elder ones had passed away, and the third, Ethelred, had succeeded to the throne. Aided by Alfred, he prepared to drive back the invaders.

This was no easy task. Men who had the daring to face the storms of the North Sea, and even to round the wild western coasts of Iceland in their low, undecked vessels driven by oars, were not likely to want courage on land. Further, the Danes, as soldiers, had great military and strategical advantages. The mail-shirt (byrnie) was common with them, but the levies of the English "fyrd" had no defensive armour. Being raiders, they had no towns, farms, wives, and children to protect. Their usual plan was to advance with their ships



as far as possible up the rivers. When the ships could go no farther, they were drawn ashore and protected with a stockade. The main body of the force swept together all the horses they could get, and, once "a-horsed", travelled over the country, burning and plundering, so fast that the slow-moving "fyrd" could not come up with them.<sup>1</sup> Plunder being their main object, the Danes avoided a battle when they could. They rarely made an attack, but when threatened drew into a stockade, and, standing shoulder to shoulder, formed the "shield wall", which was hard to break through. The heavy Danish axe, five feet long and wielded in both hands, was a terrible weapon at close quarters. And, finally, the Danes never knew when they were beaten. They were never more dangerous than when the day seemed lost. Thus in 868 they were driven headlong into York by Osbert and Ella, but rallied among the houses, and slew both kings. And this is no isolated example; the same rallying power was displayed over and over again.

Ethelred and Alfred did not make a promising beginning. They tried to storm the Danish camp situated in the tongue of land between the Kennet and Thames, near Reading. The assault failed, and though the Danes, being emboldened by success to abandon their usual tactics and risk a battle in the open, were routed by Alfred at Ashdown, yet the English lost so many men that they were beaten at Basing, and again at Marden in Wiltshire, in which latter fight Ethelred was killed. He left children, but Alfred was chosen to succeed him. It was no time for a child on the throne. Alfred tried his luck once again at Wilton, but although his men at first forced the Danes back, yet they rallied and once more were victorious.

Battles of  
Ashdown  
and Wilton,  
871.

This was desperate fighting. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* says, "Nine battles were fought this year south of the Thames", and the balance of victories did not rest with Alfred. But though the English did not win the battles, yet they won the campaign, for in the next year the Danes, having no stomach

<sup>1</sup> When the "fyrd" turned out in really large numbers it was almost certainly on foot. But there is good ground for thinking that in small bodies the fyrd moved "a-horsed", just as the Danes did. Neither side, of course, fought mounted.



for more of such bloody work, withdrew eastward and northward to regions where they met less stout foemen, and Alfred had a little breathing space.

In 877 the storm gathered afresh. In the depths of winter Guthrum and Hubba declared war. Guthrum swooped down on Alfred's royal town of Chippenham before Alfred could gather a force. The king himself, almost without followers, had to take refuge in the isle of Athelney, a marshy stronghold protected by the waters of the Tone and Parret. Never before or after were his fortunes at so low an ebb, but he did not despair. By degrees men joined him. He fell on the Danes at Ethandun (Edington), and drove them in headlong flight to their stockade. Here they were surrounded and starved into submission.

It would, no doubt, have been a more effective blow had the stockade at Chippenham been stormed. A crushing defeat might have struck such terror into the Danish counsels that they might well have judged it wise to leave Alfred alone for the future. But the risk of defeat was great, and it was not Alfred's policy. He no longer hoped to clear the Danes out from England altogether. To carry on war to the death might be attractive to a king, thirty years old, at the head of a victorious army. But Alfred never made war for his own glory. He was a statesman who looked to the good of his people. So he put aside glittering dreams of conquest, and was ready to allow the Danes to settle down in the north and east, provided they would be quiet neighbours. This is clear from the terms which he made with Guthrum.

The first condition was that Guthrum and his men should become Christians. Thus one great hindrance in the way of a peaceful union was removed; and, as the Danes were of much the same race as the English, spoke a kindred language, and had very similar institutions, there was no race-hatred between the two, such as had prevented the Saxons and Britons from living together in amity. The Saxon had hated the Dane, not because he was a Dane, but because he plundered and robbed. When he gave up these habits he could be tolerated.

The line of division settled in the Treaty of Wedmore was







## ALFRED AND THE DANES

the Watling Street; but a few years later Alfred got a better frontier. Henceforth the line ran up the estuary of the Thames to the Lea, along that river to Hertford, and across to Bedford, then followed the Ouse till it struck the Watling Street, and from there to Chester. Roughly speaking, the north and east lay in Guthrum's hands; the south and west remained to Alfred. He lost in the extent of his territory, but the hold of Wessex over Northumbria and Anglia had not been firm. In the end he was stronger in a more concentrated kingdom, and he retained London and most of the larger towns.

The Treaty of Wedmore freed Alfred from Guthrum, but at any moment a fresh band of marauders might come. To guard against this danger was Alfred's next care. He improved his army by increasing the number of the thegns, making all holders of five hides of land "take up their thegnhood", and even allowing the man with less land to become a thegn, if he had proper arms and mail armour. As the thegn was bound to follow the king for the whole course of the war,<sup>1</sup> the most effective part of the army was strengthened. Further, Alfred arranged that the fyrd should be divided into three parts, each of which would serve for a month at a time, thus securing a more permanent force from this somewhat disorderly and untrained body. He also in towns and elsewhere made "burhs", or fortified posts, on the Danish frontier for checking raiders. But, best of all, he was the first to see that England's safety lay in a fleet: the best way to meet the Danes was to fight them at sea. He built, as the *Chronicle* tells us, "long ships that were full nigh twice as long as the others; some had sixty oars,<sup>2</sup> some more; they were both swifter and steadier than the others". It is somewhat curious that though the English had themselves in early days been sea rovers, yet they had lost their taste for the sea, and Alfred had at first to employ Frisians to man his ships. Soon, however, the English became good seamen, and the fleet, the importance of which was first realised by Alfred, became England's best safeguard.

<sup>1</sup> As contrasted with the fyrd, whose members were always anxious to return to the duties of their farms.

<sup>2</sup> The usual Danish ship had thirty-two oars.



The wisdom of these precautions was shown when, at the end of his reign, Alfred had to meet a fresh invasion of Danes led by Hastings, "the worst man that ever was born". Alfred's new army was able to storm the Danish camp on the Lea, to shatter another force at Buttington in Montgomery, and finally by a great stroke to blockade and capture the Danish fleet in a narrow part of the river Lea. In 897 the Danes gave up the game and made off to join their kinsmen in Normandy, where we shall hear of them again. In England, for the present, they had found that, as a Norse poet sang:

"They got hard blows instead of shillings,  
And the axe's weight instead of tribute".

and they judged it best to leave Alfred alone.

Alfred deserves to be remembered for what he did to keep his realm safe, yet no less honour is due for what he did to make it well governed. He set in order the laws, and took such good care that the reeves and aldermen should enforce them, that in later days when troubles came again men longed for the "laws of King Alfred". From his youth up he had been a scholar, always anxious to learn, and ready to teach. It was his wish that every freeborn youth "should abide at his book till he can well understand English writing". That his people should have books to read in English, he translated from the Latin not only books on religion—the *Consolation* of Boethius and the *Pastoral* of Pope Gregory—but also books on history and geography, Bede's *History of the Church* and Orosius' *History and Geography*. At times, too, he did more than translate; he added to the books whatever seemed interesting to himself. Thus he put into Orosius' book the accounts of two voyages northwards to the White Sea and eastwards along the Baltic, made by Othere and Wulfstan, whom Alfred had himself sent out. Even more valuable than his translations was the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, which Alfred caused to be written and perhaps himself helped to write. This chronicle, which begins its story with the coming of the English, and was continued year by year from Alfred's time, is the best record we have for what happened before the Norman Conquest; it is

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the oldest history in its own tongue possessed by any nation in Europe; and by causing it to be written Alfred became the father of English prose, just as Caedmon had been the father of English poetry.

A king who was so fond of learning was sure to attract scholars to his court. Nor did Alfred neglect the Church. The plunderings of the Danes had left churches in ruins and monasteries desolate. He gave largely from his own income to rebuild them; he even went further, setting up an abbey for monks at Athelney to commemorate God's mercies to him there, and another religious house for nuns at Shaftesbury. His own daughter did not disdain to be Head of this. Further, the churchmen themselves were in nearly as evil plight as the churches. At the beginning of his reign Alfred tells us that even south of the Humber there were "few priests who could render his service-book into English", while in the north the state of the church was still worse. Thanks to Alfred's efforts this ignorance was amended. He took care to choose good bishops and trusted them to make the lower clergy do their duty.

However we look at Alfred, whether as a warrior, as a statesman, as a lawgiver, as a scholar, as a reformer, he appears equally great. Yet with all his greatness he kept all through his life the nature of a modest and simple man. "I desire," said he in his latest days, "to leave to them that come after me a remembrance of me in good works. So long as I have lived I have striven to live worthily." None can doubt that the task which this great king set himself was nobly done.

## VI. The Golden Age of the Saxons

Alfred died in 901; Ethelred II, whose reign marks the downfall of all that Alfred had done, came to the throne in 979. This chapter passes in review the seventy-eight years that elapse between the two kings each justly named, the one "the Great", the other "the Unready", or "Redeless".

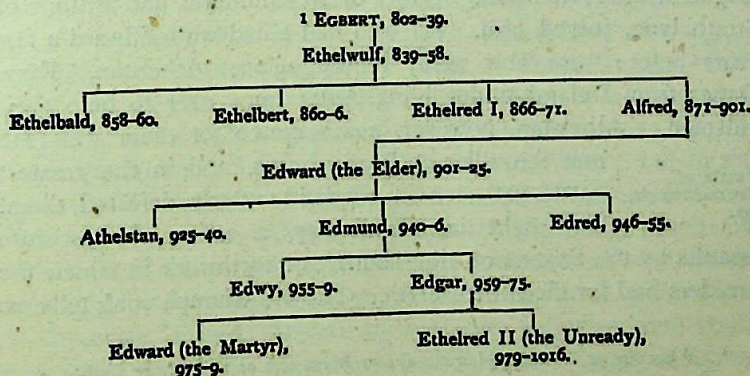


It is not altogether easy to find any one distinguishing mark of the period; yet if we take it down to 975 we may fairly call it "Three Generations of Strong Kings", for, reckoning the one son, three grandsons and two great-grandsons<sup>1</sup> sprung from Alfred, only one (Edwy) shows no good qualities as a ruler. We may remark further that these three generations all carry on Alfred's work. They do not attempt to extirpate the Danes, but they gradually bring them under their sway, so that the two races begin to join into one, and the house of Wessex again becomes supreme over all England. Finally, in the latter part of the period we shall notice a great increase in the political power of the Church; we shall see, too, the first of that long line of ecclesiastical statesmen who appear and reappear for many centuries in English history.

With these somewhat slender threads to join a series of events which are naturally rather disconnected we may bind together the story of Alfred's descendants.

Edward the Elder shone chiefly as a warrior. The title which he took—"King of the English" instead of "King of the West Saxons"—indicates his life's work. He set himself to recover the Danelaw, that district which his father had been forced to give up. The task was easier than it might seem, since the Danes of the Danelaw were not united under one ruler. None the less Edward had to proceed with caution. Aided by his warlike sister, Ethelfleda, who ruled the Midlands for him under the title of the

Edward the Elder, 901-25.





"Lady of the Mercians", he first completed the series of fortified posts which Alfred had begun. Then moving over the border he attacked the group of Danish towns on the Upper Ouse. One by one, Bedford, Huntingdon, Northampton, Cambridge, yielded to him. Ethelfleda led an army against the Five Danish Boroughs in the valley of the Trent, and captured Derby and Leicester. She died in 918, but Edward carried on the work. At length, in 925, when he was setting out on a final invasion of the north, he was met by envoys from all the northern powers, from the Danes of Northumbria, the Britons of Strathclyde, and the Angles of Bernicia, who swore to take him to "father and lord". Constantine, King of the Scots, is also said to have made an agreement with him, not improbably a military alliance. The point would have no importance but for the circumstance that four hundred years later King Edward I (Plantagenet) interpreted this agreement as evidence that the King of Scots had become the vassal king of Edward the Elder, and he used this to strengthen his claim to overlordship of Scotland. The chronicle entry is of doubtful authenticity.

That the submission of the various peoples was merely nominal became clear enough in the reign of Edward's son, Athelstan.

**Athelstan,** Athelstan first married his sister to Sigtric, Danish king  
925-40. of Northumbria, but on the death of that king did not hesitate to drive out his kinsman's sons and seize the kingdom for himself. Conduct of this kind made the other northerners uneasy. Constantine gave help to Sigtric's sons, and got together a vast league against Athelstan. Danes of Northumbria, and Britons of Strathclyde, joined him. All who had allied with Edward a few years before were now ready to war against Athelstan. Even Danes from Ireland under King Anlaf came over to help their kinsmen. Athelstan, however, was a match for them all. He

met the allies at Brunanburgh,<sup>1</sup> and, in the greatest  
**Battle of** battle yet seen in England, utterly defeated them.  
**Brunanburgh,**  
937.

The fight lasted all day, a series of desperate assaults by the Saxons on the "burh" or earthwork in which the invaders had fortified themselves. The old triumph song tells us:

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps at Bourne in Lincolnshire or Burnswark on the Solway Firth.



Here gat King Athelstan  
 And eke his brother  
 Eadmund Atheling  
 Life long glory  
 At swords edge  
 Round Brunanburh  
 Shield-wall they cleft  
 War-lindens hewed  
 Sithen sun up  
 Till the bright being  
 Sank to his settle.

Anlaf fled back to Ireland with but a handful of men. Constantine, "the hoary war man", left his eldest son dead on the field. Athelstan's triumph was complete.

His brother Edmund, who succeeded him in 940, had, however, again to fight for his power in the north. It was, in fact, the regular thing that the Danes should revolt with Edmund, each new ruler and try his mettle. Edmund was no <sup>940-6.</sup> less sturdy than Athelstan. He reduced the rebels, and to punish the King of Strathclyde, who had helped them, he attacked that kingdom and is said to have granted it to Malcolm, King of Scots. This "grant", if it was ever made, lapsed when Malcolm died, and is another historical molehill which a later age came to regard as a mountain. Together with Constantine's "submission" to Edward the Elder, this forms one ground of the claim to the overlordship of Scotland which Edward I was to put forward.

Edmund had reigned but six years when he was murdered by an outlaw whom he was endeavouring to drag from his banqueting-hall. His younger brother, Edred, had also <sup>Edred, 946-53.</sup> a short, but not an inglorious reign. Three things about him deserve note. First, as was always the case when a brother succeeded in place of the late king's young son, the crown was given to him by a decision of the Witan: but in this particular Witan sat, not only Englishmen, but Danes and Welshmen. The complete union of England was apparently not far off, when men of three races could meet in one assembly to choose their ruler. Secondly, after suppressing the usual rebellion in Northumbria, Edred divided it, not into shires, which would have been ruled by aldermen, but into two huge earldoms.



This creation of "earls"<sup>1</sup> with wide dominions was a dangerous policy, from which were to come serious troubles in the future. And thirdly, Edred's friend was the great churchman, Dunstan.

Although Dunstan had been brought up in the abbey of Glastonbury, he had no wish at first to enter the Church. He came to seek his fortune at King Athelstan's court. Dunstan. The other courtiers were jealous of his learning or annoyed by his wit, and they resolved to make him ridiculous. As he was riding across a marsh they threw him from his horse and rolled him in the mire. Dunstan left the court in disgust, fell sick of a fever, and when he recovered became a monk. Athelstan, sorry for his courtiers' rudeness, recalled him to court. Edmund again dismissed him, but two days later changed his mind. The reason is given us in a well-known story. Edmund was hunting near Cheddar; the chase swept to the edge of Cheddar cliffs; stag and hounds went headlong over, and the king seemed unable to check his horse. In the agony of the moment he vowed to make amends to Dunstan if he was saved, and the horse just pulled up on the edge. In gratitude for his escape Edmund made Dunstan Abbot of Glastonbury. Edred took him for his chief adviser.

Dunstan had won the confidence of one king, but this was no guarantee that he would be equally favoured by the next. He was again to experience the uncertainty of fortune. Edwy, 955-9. Edwy, who succeeded Edred, fell into the hands of the party who hated the monks. Consequently he soon quarrelled with Dunstan. Dunstan rebuked him for affronting all the nobles of his court by leaving the table at his coronation-feast, and even led him back by the hand like a sulky boy. Edwy retorted by driving Dunstan into exile. This angered all the monkish party, but they were still more set against the king for marrying a wife who was within the "prohibited degrees" in relationship. Archbishop Odo declared it no marriage; all Edwy's most powerful subjects revolted, and set up his brother Edgar as king. Edwy was left merely the part of England that lay south of the Thames. It seemed that England might be split up once again, but for-

<sup>1</sup> Danish, *jarl*.



tunately Edwy's death put an end to the difficulty. The whole realm came under Edgar's allegiance.

This prince is aptly called the "Peaceful". While Edgar was on the throne, the long term of Saxon prosperity that had had its spring with Alfred, and its summer under Edward and Athelstan, remained unbroken. It was indeed drawing to an end; Edgar's reign wore the peacefulness of an autumn, so calm and fair that it leads men to forget how soon it must pass away. Since Edgar's first act was to recall Dunstan, and as Dunstan remained his trusted minister throughout, we may find in the events of the reign the best example of Dunstan's policy.

Dunstan, we have seen, was a monk; Edgar made him Archbishop of Canterbury. Thus the first field for his activity lay in Church affairs. It happened that at this time there was a great revival in monastic affairs going on on the Continent. The Benedictine monks of Clugny, who led stern, hard, self-sacrificing lives, were everywhere taken as models. In one respect the secular clergy were not doing what the Church expected them to do. It was thought right that they should remain, like the monks, unmarried. At this time, however, this rule was badly kept. Many of the seculars had wives, and this gave great offence. Dunstan did his best to make the seculars remain unmarried, but he was not altogether successful. Under these circumstances it became the fashion to think a great deal of monks and less of the secular<sup>1</sup> clergy. This showed itself not only in the revival of old monasteries and the setting up of new ones, but also in the practice of turning out the seculars from positions of dignity and putting monks in their places. Thus the secular canons of the Cathedral of Winchester were turned out, and monks installed instead of them. The same thing was done at Worcester. No doubt, in some respects, the change was for the better; the monks led stricter lives, and they were more learned. But it raised a great jealousy between regulars and seculars. Although Dunstan, as head of the Church, may be said to have approved of those changes

<sup>1</sup> Monks, friars, and others who lived under a rule like that of St. Benedict, or in later days like those of St. Francis or St. Dominic, were called "regulars" (Lat. *regula*). The rest of the clergy were called "seculars".



which some of his bishops made, he did not make them in his own see. The real reform that he was anxious for was that the clergy should be better educated.

It would be a mistake to look on Dunstan merely as a churchman. He was more than that. He was a great statesman. To him we may attribute the wise policy by which Edgar made friends of the Danes settled in England, making some aldermen, others bishops, and admitting many to his Witan. He also continued to keep on good terms with the kings of the Scots. Indeed, just as Edmund is said to have handed over Strathclyde to Malcolm, so Edgar, we are told, gave Lothian to Kenneth. But there is little evidence to support this assertion and it was conquered by the Scots fifty years later.

Though we may give Dunstan the credit of much that was done in Edgar's reign, yet the king showed himself a capable ruler. He issued improved laws, and travelled frequently over his realm to see that they were kept. More than that, he made the inhabitants of each "hundred" responsible for any misdeeds committed there. He enlarged the fleet and himself made frequent voyages with it. And even if we distrust the old story that he was rowed across the Dee by six vassal-kings, yet none the less we may find a truth expressed in it. It is a picturesque way of saying that he was a prosperous and powerful monarch, and there was none found in Britain to rival his greatness.

## VII. The Saxon Downfall

From Egbert to Edgar may be called the Golden Age of Saxon history. Kings and people alike are vigorous: enemies abroad are beaten off, rebellions at home crushed, law and justice enforced, learning encouraged. We have likened Edgar's reign to a fine autumn: we may go

The Saxon  
downfall,  
975-1066.



further, and say that after him came down winter fierce and stormy. In the next ninety years, from the reign of Edward the Martyr till the death of Harold (975-1066), Saxon England went from one calamity to another. The kingdom could not even preserve itself from foreign conquest; we shall see a time of Danish attack ending in a Danish monarch on the throne, and then a time of Norman interference ending in the Norman Conquest. It will be convenient to divide the whole period into two parts corresponding to these two foreign influences, but through the whole we can trace in many of the chief men a decay of the old Saxon valour and self-reliance, and a new growth of indecision, discontent, treachery, that gave the foreigner his opportunity. There are brilliant exceptions: Edmund Ironside and Harold must not be forgotten. But fate was unkind enough to cut off both of them before they could do more than show their budding promise, while it left the incapable Ethelred and the feeble Edward the Confessor ample leisure to reap the whole harvest of their own incapacity.

The grouping of the events of this time shows a certain symmetry which it is well to bear in mind. From the accession of Ethelred the Unready to the Norman Conquest is a period of eighty-seven years. The middle part of it (1017-1042) is occupied with the Danish kings on the throne (Canute and his sons); the beginning part and the end part are covered by Saxon kings. Further, the beginning and end parts have a strong resemblance. Each period starts with a *long* reign of a *feeble* king followed by a very *short* reign of a *vigorous* king; each alike ends in a *foreign* conquest.<sup>1</sup>

1 PERIOD I (Saxon kings):		PERIOD II (Saxon kings):	
Long reign of <i>Ethelred the Unready</i> , 978-1016.	Ending in Danish conquest and Danish kings, 1017-1042.	Long reign of <i>Edward the Confessor</i> , 1042-1066.	Ending in Norman conquest, 1066, and Norman kings.
Short reign of <i>Edmund Ironside</i> , 1016-1017.		Short reign of <i>Harold</i> , 1066.	



(975-1042)

## 1. The Danish Conquest of England

The story of the Saxon downfall opens ominously with murder. The young King Edward, riding past his stepmother's castle at Corfe, halted at the door and asked for a cup of wine. The treacherous queen brought it herself, and while the king was drinking it made one of her men stab him in the back, that her own son, Ethelred, might get the throne. For eight-and-thirty years England was to regret that deed, for Ethelred's reign proved one of the worst in her history.

Ethelred's name of the Unready or Redeless—that is to say, “the Man of Ill Counsel”—fitly describes him. He was selfish, idle, weak. He had not the vigour to control the great earls and ealdormen in whose hands a strong king like Edgar had been able safely to leave so much of the government of the country. Instead of being useful servants of the state, these men became jealous and quarrelsome, struggling for their own power, and neglecting their duties. Upon an England in the hands of an incapable king and disloyal officials down swooped the Danes; and by this time the Danes were even more formidable than they had been in Alfred's reign. Norway and Denmark were now each of them kingdoms. The invaders were no longer plunderers, but trained warriors, obeying the commands of a king who, being sure of help from a mass of his kinsmen already settled in the country, aimed at nothing less than a complete conquest.

England's need was desperate; yet never was she left so utterly without help by her king and leaders. There was only one remedy; it was to fight, and fight hard. Yet when the invaders came they found England a prey, for, as the *Chronicle* says, “no shire would help other”. Then, by the advice of Sigiric, who had succeeded Dunstan, Ethelred made another plan for dealing with the Danes: instead of hard blows he gave them shillings; he tried to buy them off with the Danegeld, a tax which he made his luckless subjects pay. This policy, however, only put off the evil day to

Ethelred the  
“Unready”,  
978-1016.

Saxon  
division.

Danegeld.



a still worse to-morrow. The Danes, paid once, came back again and again for more, and they brought fresh swarms with them. Danegeld, first imposed in 991, was taken again in 994, in 1002, and in 1011. As Ethelred's Witan approved of the tax, it is plain that it was not the king alone who had fallen from the valour of the old days. When we read of one army "that it was the leaders first who began the flight"; of another, "when they were east, then men held our force west; and when they were south, then was our force taken north"; of another, "through something was flight ever resolved upon, and so the enemy ever had the victory"; or, again, that the king's most trusted alderman, Edric, betrayed his plans to the enemy; or, again, that after more than twenty years' harrying, the Witan had no more practical advice to recommend than a three days' fast and a daily chanting of the third psalm, "in order that God may grant us that we overcome our foes"; and, finally, that Ethelred himself would never risk his own person in a battle-field,—we feel that England has come on evil days.

Unfortunately, Ethelred's feebleness was not the worst of him: having by one act brought the Danes into England, he made them his lasting foes by another. He had recourse to treachery. Suddenly, in a time of truce, when he had got rid of the Norwegians by a treaty with

**The Massacre  
of St. Brice,  
1002.**

their king, Olaf, and pacified the Normans by a marriage with Emma, the sister of their duke, he caused a number of Danes, including some of his own Danish mercenaries and hostages, to be murdered. This "Massacre of St. Brice's Day" drew down on him the whole might of Denmark, for among the victims so slain were the sister of Sweyn, King of Denmark, and her husband.

Ethelred, like all weak kings, was a prey to bad favourites. He chose as his friend Edric, Earl of Mercia, and married him to his sister Edith. Edric may at the outset have meant to act with vigour against the Danes, but he turned out a very prince of traitors. His nickname of Streona, "the Grasper", shows that his guiding star was avarice and selfishness. He soon appeared in his true colours. His rivals at home he got rid of by murder, and he was perfectly ready to betray his country to the enemy. In 1013 Sweyn invaded England in

**Edric Streona.**



person: there was nothing to stop him; he swept through Northumbria, the Midlands, the west. Edric betrayed his master and persuaded the Witan to offer Sweyn the throne. London alone stoutly held out for Ethelred, till it heard that the miserable man had deserted his post and fled to Normandy. He came back to England after Sweyn's death, but two years later he died himself.

After his death the greater part of England, being in Danish hands, acknowledged Sweyn's son, Canute, as king. There was one honourable exception. London held true to the line of Alfred, and chose Ethelred's son, Edmund.

Edmund, who gained by his bravery the name of "Ironside", was of very different mould from his feeble father. He gathered an army, and twice fought with Canute's men at Penselwood and Sherston. Neither battle was decisive, but gathering fresh forces Edmund drove the Danes off London and won a victory at Brentford; a fourth hurled a number of them into the isle of Sheppey; these successes brought the traitor Edric over again to Edmund's side to be a fresh curse to his race, for in the fifth fight, when Edmund was engaged against the whole weight of Canute's forces at Assandun (Ashington in Essex), the day was lost only because Edric again deserted on the battlefield and went over once more to the Danes. Some months later Edmund died suddenly—possibly he was murdered by Edric—and in despair the nation took Canute as King. There is a certain just retribution in the fact that one of the first things Canute did was to have Edric put to death.

Canute, though a foreign conqueror, was a good king. He was infinitely more powerful than any king of the house of Wessex, for England was merely a province in his dominions. The King of Scots is said to have done homage to him, though the grounds for the assertion are doubtful. He was also King of Denmark, and in 1028 he subdued Norway, so that he seemed to be on the way to become an emperor of the north, a northern Charlemagne. But his might gave England that peace of which she stood sorely in need. War came to an end with the triumph of the enemy,

**Edmund.**  
**Ironside,**  
**1016-7.**

**Canute,**  
**1017-35.**



and the enemy turned into a good friend. No rebellions broke the serenity of his reign. Towns grew rich and prosperous, for the Danes were great traders, and Canute's wide possessions gave merchants new chances for trade. He ruled sternly but fairly. He married Ethelred's widow, and so joined himself to the old royal family. He employed Danes and English alike; the Earls of Northumbria and East Anglia were Danes, those of Mercia and Wessex were Englishmen. The name of the last officer, Godwin, we shall have occasion to remember. Canute felt so certain of the loyalty of his new subjects that he was able to send home all his Danish army, save only a small bodyguard of "house-carles", and even this consisted in part of Englishmen. This shows that he was loved, just as the old story of his rebuke to the flattering courtiers, who urged him to forbid the tide to come any farther, shows that he had a reputation for wisdom.

Canute's eldest son succeeded him in Norway. The two others, Harold Harefoot and Hardicanute, divided England, the north obeying Harold, Wessex and the south Hardicanute. The latter spent most of his time in Denmark, so that the chief power fell into the hands of his mother, Emma, and as Hardicanute tarried long in Denmark the whole realm came into Harold's hands; but Harold dying in 1040, Hardicanute became king. He in his turn did not survive long, and with him the Danish dominion in England came to an end.<sup>1</sup>

Canute's sons:  
Harold and  
Hardicanute,  
1035-42.

## 2. Edward the Confessor and the Normans

When Hardicanute died the Witan had to choose a fresh king. They went back to the old West Saxon house, and chose Edward, second son of Ethelred

Edward the Confessor, 1042-66.

<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to speculate what would have been the history of England had Canute's descendants been "three generations of strong kings"—as Alfred's were.

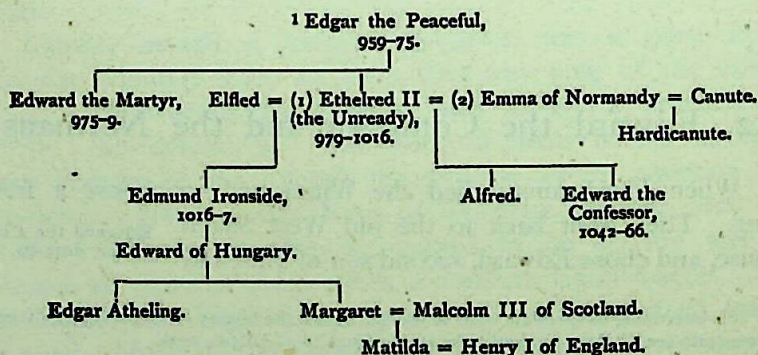


the Unready.<sup>1</sup> Since this king's reign saw the rise of Norman influence in England, our first task is to trace the chief links that were drawing England and Normandy into closer connection.

The Normans were in origin Northmen, just as were the Danes who had so long harassed England. For many years they had raided the north of France under the leadership of Rolf the Ganger. In 911 the French King, Charles the Simple, had "granted" to the Danish leader the land which he could not keep. Thus began the line of the great Dukes of Normandy. Once settled in France the Northmen soon grew very different from their Danish kin. They began to use the French tongue and French customs, and became much more polished and civilized. It has always been a curious mark of the Northmen that wherever they went, when once fighting was over, they were ready to adopt the customs and generally the language of the place, and thus got on well with the original inhabitants. Though by nature rough and wild, they could, it seemed, put on any civilization, as it were a garment.

Northman in Normandy would naturally be ready to help Northman in England, and we have seen that the Danes often used Normandy as a base from which to attack, or as a shelter when beaten. But the earliest connection between England and the Norman house was made when Ethelred married Emma, daughter of Richard I of Normandy. A Norman queen is the first link in the chain of events that leads, some sixty years later, to a Norman

Marrying Ethelred to Emma of Normandy.





king. Emma's influence, however, went over to the Danish side. After Ethelred's death she married the Dane, Canute, and devoted herself to placing her Danish son, Hardicanute, on the throne. But her second son by her first husband was destined to draw still closer the bond between England and Normandy.

This second son, Edward the Confessor, was indeed more of a Norman than an Englishman. He came to the throne about five-and-thirty years old. At least twenty-five years of his life had been spent continuously in Normandy. Norman speech was at least as

Edward the Confessor, Norman in tastes.

**Edward the Confessor, Norman in tastes.**

familiar to him as English. All his friends and habits were Norman. England knew nothing of him; and he knew nothing either of English statesmen or English ways. Above all he favoured churchmen. When he became king he wanted to surround himself with his Norman friends, and to raise them to posts of honour. Thus Robert, Abbot of Jumièges, who, we are told, was trusted by the king "as no other man was trusted", became successively Bishop of London and Archbishop of Canterbury; another Norman followed him in the see of London; a third, the king's nephew, was Earl of Hereford; another, Richard Scrob, was the first to make the English acquainted with a Norman novelty which was to be the source of much suffering in the days to come: he built the first castle in England. All this of course was unpopular. Two parties arose: one the king's friends, Normans and their followers; the other the national or Saxon party. At the head of this we find Edward's opponent, Godwin. Edward, indeed, owed Godwin an old grudge. In Harold Harefoot's reign Edward's elder brother, Alfred, had landed to try to seize the throne. Godwin had been sent against him. Since he was Harefoot's officer Godwin was only doing his duty in capturing Alfred. He did his duty, but certainly in a most treacherous way. He met Alfred, pretended to join his side, and then made him and his followers prisoners while they were in their beds. Harold Harefoot caused Alfred to be put to death by thrusting out his eyes. Edward could hardly forgive Godwin for his share in this brutality.

Thus the history of England from the accession of Edward

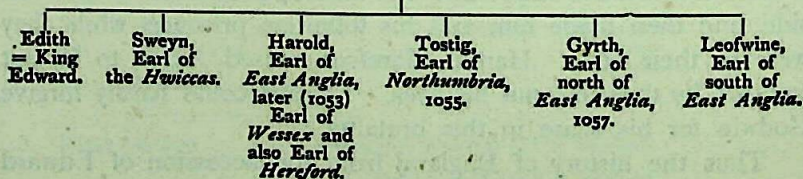


the Confessor to the Norman Conquest is a struggle on the part of Godwin and his sons, Harold at the head of them, to maintain their power against the king and his Norman friends. Like all periods where a family is of great importance the story is confusing, because it demands a knowledge of relationships. It somewhat resembles the early part of the Wars of the Roses, save that there is no fighting. Edward the Confessor is not unlike Henry VI either in position or character. Just as in Henry VI's reign we hear little of the king, and much of Richard of York, Warwick, Salisbury, and Somerset, so here there will be much to say of Godwin, Harold, Tostig, and William of Normandy, while Edward the Confessor plays a very small part.

At first Godwin's position was enormously strong. He himself was Earl of Wessex; his eldest son, Sweyn, was Earl of the Hwiccas, covering the counties of Oxford, Gloucester, Hereford, Berkshire, and Somerset; his second son, Harold, was Earl of East Anglia, which included not only the East Anglia of our day, but Cambridge, Huntingdon, and Essex as well; a nephew, Beorn, held an earldom covering Dorset and part of Wilts. To crown all, Godwin's daughter, Edith, was Edward's wife. There was no one to equal the family in power.<sup>1</sup> Leofric, Earl of Mercia, and Siward, Earl of Northumbria, could scarcely be called rivals.

By degrees this power began to break up. The king disliked it. His Norman friends tried to thwart Godwin whenever they could. Godwin's eldest son, Sweyn, behaved badly. He fell in love with an abbess, and carried her off. He was outlawed, and his possessions shared between Harold and Beorn. Three years later he came to the English coast, invited Beorn on board his ship, and had him murdered. Godwin's influence was strong

<sup>1</sup> Godwin, Earl of *Wessex*, 1053.





enough to get him forgiven after this monstrous offence, but men were offended. Their confidence in Godwin was shaken. His enemies looked out for a chance to overthrow him.

The chance was not long in coming. The king's brother-in-law, Eustace of Boulogne, crossed over from France to see him. On his way back his followers tried to quarter themselves by force on the townsmen of Dover. One man refused to receive these unwelcome guests.

Quarrel with  
Eustace of  
Boulogne.

Blows were struck, a riot began, and seven of the Frenchmen were killed. Eustace complained to the king, and Edward ordered Godwin to ravage the town as a punishment. Godwin, however, had the good English notion that trial should come before punishment. The men of Dover had not been heard in their own defence. He flatly refused to obey the king's order. The king, urged on by his Norman friends, determined to treat this conduct as rebellion. He summoned a meeting of the Witenagemot at Gloucester, and bade Godwin attend it. Godwin came indeed, but with Harold, Sweyn, and all his armed men at his back. As Leofric and Siward had called out their Mercian and Northumbrian forces on the king's side, it looked as if civil war would break out.

It is, however, the distinguishing mark between this time and the Wars of the Roses, that whereas in the later period any excuse will do for war, in the earlier men again and again advance to the very verge of it, but shrink from taking the fatal step over the verge. The Witan was adjourned to London. Godwin came there protesting his innocence; day by day his followers melted away, "and ever the more the longer he staid". At length Godwin saw that the game was up. He and his sons all fled from the country. They were outlawed; their earldoms taken and given to their enemies.

Flight of  
Godwin,  
1051.

This of itself was enough to make the year 1051 of no pleasant memory, for the fall of Godwin meant the triumph of the Norman party. But another event, more ominous still, was to mark it. This was the visit to England of Duke William of Normandy.

It will be more convenient to make a fuller acquaintance with



Duke William later, at a time when England was to know him only too well as William the Conqueror. But there is scarcely any doubt on the object of the visit. It was no accident that he came at a time when Edward the Confessor's Norman friends were supreme. The king had no son, and there was no obvious heir. The duke came to spy out the land; and we are told that Edward made him some sort of promise that he should succeed to the throne. Of course Edward had no right to do this. The crown of England was his, but it was not his to give. None the less William had got what he wanted; when the time came he would be able to call himself rightful heir to the throne. He had, it must be remembered, some sort of family claim, for he and Edward the Confessor were cousins.

The time, however, was not yet; Godwin had been driven out, but his power was not broken. In 1052 his sons, Harold and Leofwine, landed in the west, where he soon joined them. Again one part of England was arrayed in arms against the other, and once again there was no fighting to speak of. Men "were loath to fight against their own kin"; it was a pity "that Englishmen should destroy one another to make room for foreigners". So, we are told, Edward pardoned Godwin and his sons, and received them back again. Edward was too weak to do anything else. Godwin's forces were stronger than his; the people vowed that "they would live or die with Godwin". If we look for a reason for this sudden devotion to the man from whose side they had melted like snow the year before, it may well be found in William of Normandy's visit and Edward the Confessor's promise. If news of that had leaked out, the people of England were wise in supporting Godwin; perhaps Robert of Jumièges, who had arranged the promise, was wise too. Under usual circumstances an Archbishop of Canterbury would be safe from violence whatever he had done, but it seems that Robert had done something that made him nervous, archbishop though he was, for he fled to the Continent, and two Norman bishops fled with him.

Close on Godwin's restoration came his death. Unfortunately Harold was no better able than his father to resist grasping at



land and power for the family. By doing so, he made enemies who were sure to do him an ill turn when the chance came. Thus, when Siward of Northumbria died, Harold secured the earldom for his brother Tostig, although Siward left a son. Further, he did his best to get hold of the earldom of Mercia, thereby incurring the enmity of Elfgar and his sons, Edwin and Morcar.<sup>1</sup> Probably in doing so Harold was himself aiming at the throne, yet he was digging the ground from beneath his own feet; his chance of resisting the Normans lay in having England united in his defence; and when the time came it was precisely these three—Tostig, Edwin, and Morcar—who failed him. For the time, however, Harold's prospects were bright. But two misfortunes, towards the end of the reign, weakened him. The first was a stroke of pure ill-luck. A boat in which he was sailing was driven by the weather to the shores of Ponthieu. This was indeed a windfall for the Duke of Normandy. Following the usual uncourteous habit of the time, Harold was made prisoner, and William would not let him go till he had sworn to recognize his claim to the throne. It seems that William saw plain enough who was likely to be his most dangerous rival. The second trouble came from the Northumbrian earldom. There was no prosperity in that ill-gotten gain. The Northumbrians had rebelled against Tostig and driven him out. Harold tried vainly to patch up the quarrel, but was obliged in the end to allow them to have as earl Morcar, son of Elfgar. This boded ill. Morcar was no lover of the house of Godwin; and Tostig went off to the Continent vowing vengeance on the brother who had, as he thought, basely deserted him.

When Edward the Confessor died, on January 5, 1066, and the Witan chose Harold to succeed him, it was clear that the new king would have need of all his valour and wisdom to keep

<sup>1</sup> The shifts among the earldoms are very confusing. Harold succeeded to his father's earldoms in Wessex; by doing so he left East Anglia vacant, and it was given to Elfgar, son of Leofric, Earl of Mercia. When Leofric died, Elfgar got Mercia, but could not retain East Anglia, which was shared between Harold's younger brothers, Leofwine and Gyrth. After that came the struggle in which Harold got Elfgar outlawed and seized Mercia. Elfgar recovered it, and it eventually passed to his son Edwin. The main point to remember is that until Tostig was cast out by Northumbria, Godwin's sons ruled practically all England, except Mercia. (See table, p. 48.)



his throne secure. Edwin and Morcar were jealous of him, since he was not of royal blood<sup>1</sup>; Tostig was beseeching king after king on the Continent for help against his brother; and, most dangerous of all, William of Normandy was gathering a host to assert his claim to the kingdom.

Harold becomes king, 1066.

Career of William of Normandy.

William had already given proof that he was not the man to put his hand to the plough and turn back. Born in 1027, he had succeeded as a boy of seven to what seemed an inheritance of woe. As was always the case under the feudal system, a minority meant a time of wild disorder. Four of the young duke's guardians were assassinated, one after the other. In the midst of battle and murder William formed that strong, relentless character which marked him. In 1047 the whole of the western part of his duchy revolted, but William, with the aid of the King of France, overthrew the rebels at Val-ès-dunes. Step by step his power went forward; he married Matilda, daughter of the Count of Flanders, and so gained a useful ally; he humbled his fiercest rival, Geoffrey of Anjou, and wrested Maine from him; he even beat the armies of his feudal superior, the King of France, and forced him to sue for peace. Harold had to deal with a ruler who, though in name a vassal, was more powerful than his master.

In making ready for his invasion, William left nothing to chance. Not only did he gather his own barons, but he invited help from other parts. The Counts of Brittany and Boulogne joined him, and warriors came from Aquitaine, Anjou, Flanders, and even distant Naples and Sicily. The prospect was attractive. Men were ready for an adventure under the banner of a renowned leader, all the more since they were likely to win lands or plunder by doing so. While this great force of the most warlike fighters in Europe was trooping in, William busied himself in the spring and summer of 1066 in building a fleet. In order to justify his invasion he put forward a solemn claim to the throne, reciting the promises of Edward and Harold, and even persuaded the Pope

Preparations for invasion, 1066.

<sup>1</sup> He was Edward the Confessor's brother-in-law; he was also distantly connected (through his mother) with the Danish line of kings.



to give his benediction to the enterprise. He had thus enlisted all sorts of forces on his side—love of adventure, the authority of law, greed of gain, and the blessings of the Church.

While knights were assembling and ships were building in Normandy, Harold had called out his army to guard the southern shore. Months passed, and the invaders did not come. The Saxon ships that had guarded the Channel were laid up. The old weakness of the fyrd showed itself once more. Men grew tired of waiting, and were beginning to disperse, when the storm burst where it was least expected. Tostig, aided by the King of Norway, landed in Yorkshire, and scattered the army with which Edwin and Morcar sought to resist him. Dangerous as it was to leave the south, Harold had to hurry north. His bodyguard, the housecarles, went with him, and men of the fyrd joined him on the march. He met the invaders at Stamford Bridge, on the Derwent, and overthrew them. Tostig and the Norwegian king were both slain. The vast army, which had come in three hundred ships, was so shattered that twenty-four were enough to carry it away.

Invasion  
of Tostig  
and Harold  
Hardrada.

Battle of  
Stamford  
Bridge.

It was a great victory, but it was Harold's last. The wind, which so often in later years was England's best ally,<sup>1</sup> on this occasion turned traitor. Blowing from the north, it had brought Tostig with it. While Harold was encountering him, it veered to the south and wafted Duke William over to Pevensey. "Had I been there," cried Harold, "they had never made good their landing." He hurried his army southward. In nine days they had travelled the 200 miles northward: they fought Stamford Bridge on September 25, started southwards again on October 2, were marching out of London by the 11th, and in two days more had covered nearly another 60 miles to the south. This headlong speed left the northern levies under Edwin and Morcar far behind; but the earls were not, it would seem, doing all they could have done to support Harold.

It might have been better strategy to wait near London for reinforcements, and compel the enemy to advance and give battle far from his base; but Harold could not look on calmly while the

<sup>1</sup> "Aflavit Deus. 1588."



Normans laid the countryside waste; besides, the reinforcements might join the foe, and not him. He marched south to fight it out once and for all.

The battle that was to decide England's fate was fought on October 14, 1066. Harold drew up his men on a hill eight miles north of Hastings: through his position ran the <sup>Battle of</sup> ~~Hastings.~~ road to London; his rear was covered by the woods in which his men, if beaten, might gather again. His soldiers fought on foot; the house-carles in the centre were armed mostly with two-handed axes or long swords; but on the wings he had some hastily raised levies, some armed with clubs, some with spears, some with scythes.

William, well pleased that his fortnight's ravaging of the country had drawn his enemy southward, and saved him from the difficulties of an advance northwards through the Weald, moved his men forward to the attack. As they topped the rise of one hill they came in sight of the Saxons drawn up on an opposite slope at Senlac. The Norman strength lay chiefly in the mail-clad cavalry, a force then and for long after held to be superior to any infantry. But the Duke did not rely on his cavalry alone. He had with him a large body of infantry and a number of archers. His men advanced to the attack across the valley in three lines: the archers in front, the infantry behind them, and the horsemen in the rear. The battle began with a volley of arrows, which Harold's men answered with spears, javelins, throwing axes and other missiles. This proved too hot for the archers, and William pushed his infantry up to the attack. These reached the firm line of Saxon shields, but could not break it. The real weight of William's forces was then flung into the battle. Up the slope, already dotted with corpses, rode the horsemen; with a tremendous crash they came on, some of them, like Taillefer, penetrating the line, and only being struck down inside it. Still the Saxons held firm, and plied their axes vigorously till even the horsemen recoiled, the Breton knights, who formed the left wing, retreating in great confusion. A portion of the shire levies thought the battle was won, and ran down the hill to pursue the foe. But their rash courage proved their ruin. William turned on them with his unbroken centre and destroyed them. They were, how-



ever, but a small part of the Saxon force. The rest were still strong and undaunted in their position.

Indeed, so far William had made but little real progress. His attacks on the main Saxon position had been beaten off. He had only won a small success over an ill-disciplined portion of the enemy. Yet this small success proved the key to victory.

A second charge and a prolonged and furious hand-to-hand struggle had cost both sides dear, but the shields still remained steady round the English standards of the Dragon and the Fighting Man. Morning had worn to afternoon when William bethought him of a stratagem. He ordered a feigned retreat. The Normans fell back in seeming rout. Again the Saxon levies of the fyrd repeated their mistake. This time a huge mass of them poured from their position, and were again trampled and cut down in the open. All that remained to Harold was his guard, the trustworthy body of house-carles in the centre.

The last stage in the battle was to overcome this stubborn body. They were subjected to the fiercest trial which soldiers can have to undergo: in turn plied with arrow fire to which they could make no reply (since Harold had no bowmen left, and his house-carles had used up their missile weapons), and then charged by the horse.<sup>1</sup> "In the English ranks," says William of Poitiers, "the only movement was the dropping of the dead; the living stood motionless." How fiercely they fought is shown by the fact that Duke William had three horses killed under him. But at last the end came. Harold was struck in the eye by one of the arrows fired in the air: the Norman knights burst into the line: the scanty remainder of the English army scattered into the forest in their rear.

Shakespeare has written:

"This England never did, nor never shall,  
Lie at the proud foot of a conqueror,  
But when it first did help to wound itself".

The period of English history which we have followed in this chapter gives a striking example of this. Twice in ninety years

<sup>1</sup> Compare June 18, 1815.



was England at a conqueror's feet. It was not for want of valour. None could be braver than Edmund Ironside or Harold. None could do more than give their lives for their country, and the English army at Hastings poured out its blood like water for its king. It was not the open enemy that was to be feared, but the familiar friend; not the Dane or Norman, but the recreant Englishman. The falseness of Ethelred, the treachery of Edric, the selfish greed of the house of Godwin, the rebellion of Tostig, the half-heartedness of Edwin and Morcar—these were the true causes of the Saxon downfall.

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## VIII. England under Foreign Kings

### The Normans, 1066–1154

It is a common observation that our early history divides by reigns much more easily than our later history. The reason, too, is as plain as the fact. It is not because the character of each monarch differed more widely in early days than in later ones, but because there was a wider field for difference in character to show itself. When the king had himself a large share in government, it made much difference to the kingdom whether he was strong or feeble, honest or untrustworthy, ambitious or lazy. So long as the ministers he chose merely did his will, then all in the end turned on his character. Government of this kind is called *personal* Government. But now another body has grown up which has taken from the king many of his powers and duties. Consequently the character of Parliament, and of the ministers who carry out the will of Parliament, has become more important than the character of the king. Hence in later days we draw our divisions rather by ministries than by reigns; this is the era of *representative* Government.

It would then be quite a reasonable method to divide the period from the Norman Conquest to the accession of Henry II merely by reigns, for the characters of the kings are themselves



diverse enough to give a distinct stamp to each. But we must not only observe differences, we must seek for likenesses also; and such a search does not go far before it shows that all four reigns have a peculiarity common to them all, and yet possessed by no reign which follows. Each of the four kings has the character of a *foreigner* ruling by right of conquest over a conquered people. The kings were Norman, and the people Saxon; Saxon subjects held down by Norman conquerors. It is true that Saxon revolts were not quite so common as might be expected, but the Saxons learnt that to rebel was to invite the chastisement of scorpions in place of the chastisement of whips. Their position was hopeless. In addition, they speedily found that, hard master as the king was, the Norman baron was worse, and so they supported the Crown against the "petty tyrant". Yet it was a sullen support, given from self-interest, with no motive of loyalty or affection about it. Kings and barons alike were hateful to them as foreigners: they submitted to the rule of a foreign king as being better than that of foreign barons. But their real desire was to be rid of them all.

England under foreign kings.

Supported by English through fear of the barons.

By the time Henry II's reign is reached this feeling of antagonism was dwindling. Henry II was no longer regarded as a foreign king; the division between conquerors and conquered was growing less sharp; even the barons were taking a more national character. We shall have to dwell more upon this in the next period; for the present it is enough to draw a mental line of division between Stephen and Henry II. On one side of it are Norman kings, on the other English kings.

Remembering, then, that we have to deal with kings who were foreigners, we must see—

1. What the Norman Conquest meant for England, and how William I established and kept up his power; how also his sons continued his policy; and—

2. What happened when the king, instead of being strong like William I and Rufus and Henry I, was a weak man.

In tracing these events we shall see the Feudal System at its best, and also at its worst.



## The Conquest and the Feudal System, 1066-1135

### William I; William II; Henry I

The victory of Hastings laid the south and east of England at William's feet, but it did not touch the north and west. English disunion and submission. win and Morcar's forces were still dangerous. William's conduct, indeed, shows that he did not expect the country of Alfred and Edmund Ironside to submit after one defeat only. But the English were still quarrelling among themselves; so, though the Witan chose Edgar Atheling, the grandson of Edmund Ironside, to succeed Harold as king, yet in a short time they found it hopeless to resist further. William, indeed, was anxious for them to submit of their own free will. He had moved cautiously towards London, and had burned Southwark; but then, instead of besieging London, he had crossed the Thames and moved his army to Berkhamstead. Thither an embassy, with the Atheling himself at the head of it, came to William and offered him the crown. Thus he was able to say that he ruled not as conqueror, but as the lawful king of England elected by the Witan. Canute, and even Alfred, his two greatest predecessors, had owed their crown to the same title.

Being able to say he was lawful king was a great advantage, but William was still in an extremely difficult position. He had two things to do: the first, to subdue the English thoroughly; the second, to keep his own Norman followers contented and obedient, to reward them, and yet not make them so strong that they could revolt against him. He had, in fact, to keep himself master of both Normans and English alike.

His first stroke was to declare that all those who had fought against him at Hastings were rebels, fighting against their lawful king, and that their estates were forfeited to him. Thus he became master of almost all the land in the south of England. It was not long before he got hold of the rest. In 1067, when the Conqueror had gone

Forfeiture of  
estates to the  
king.



back to the Continent, leaving his brother, Odo of Bayeux, as Justiciar, to rule the country, rebellions burst out everywhere. In the south-west, in Mercia, in Northumbria, there were English risings. Luckily for William there was no English union among the English rebels. Each district took as its leader a descendant of its own earl; each fought for itself and each was consequently crushed by itself. William returned, subdued the west, took Exeter, harried Gloucester and Worcester, and drove the English leaders to take refuge in Ireland and Wales. In the north he had sterner work to do. The rebels were headed by Waltheof, Earl of Huntingdon, and Margaret, sister of Edgar Atheling. A force of Danes under King Sweyn, who had hopes of recovering Canute's kingdom for himself, also took the field with them. At first they were successful. Durham and York fell into their hands. But the allies soon began to quarrel, and William, marching north, found them an easy prey. The Danes drew off in their ships, plundering Peterborough on their way, thereby making themselves as odious to the English as they had been in Ethelred's day. Waltheof was forced to submit; and to punish the rebels, and guard against another rising, William harried the whole of the Vale of York. From the Humber to the Tees everything that could be burnt was burnt. The people were slain, driven out or left to die of starvation. Nearly twenty years after, the *Domesday Survey* echoes the same story of one estate after another—"Waste".

This harrying of the north showed that William would not endure rebellion tamely. He still had work to do, however. Amid the eastern fens, in the Isle of Ely, surrounded by marshes, Hereward, "the Last of the English", still resisted. He had come there from Peterborough, when the Danes left, and he was joined by the last of William's enemies, among them Morcar and the Bishop of Durham. For a year he held out. The monks of Ely are said to have betrayed the way into his camp, but when Morcar and his friends surrendered, Hereward with a few followers fought his way out and escaped. Morcar and the rest were treated as rebels. The King

English risings, 1067.

Waltheof, 1067.

Harrying of the North.

Hereward, 1070-2.



of Scotland, too, was forced to yield and to acknowledge William as his lord, just as his ancestors had acknowledged Edward the Elder and Canute.

These useless risings completed the work that Hastings had begun. They riveted the chain of William's power round England's neck. Each rebellion was followed by fresh confiscations of land, and the land was used to reward Norman followers. Even in the cases where an Englishman was not turned out from his estates, he was obliged to pay a fine and to admit that the land was really the king's and not his own; that he was the king's tenant and vassal and therefore bound to serve him.

This made more definite what is called the Feudal System. It is not true to say that this was altogether introduced by the Norman kings, for the essence of the feudal system, the idea that because a man had land, therefore he had certain rights and owed certain duties, had existed in Saxon times. In Edgar's day it had been ordained that every "landless man should have a lord", and "commendation", that is to say, the practice of a man's placing himself under the protection of a more powerful neighbour, was also common enough in Saxon England. But the Normans drew closer the tie between the man and his land. The holding of land became the basis of everything. The king at the head was the owner of all the land. He granted large estates to his nobles and barons, who were called *tenants-in-chief*, and who were bound by these grants of land to fight for the king if he called on them to do so. The tenants-in-chief in their turn granted parts of their estates to their followers, who were then called *mesne-tenants*<sup>1</sup> and were bound in their turn to obey the tenants-in-chief as superiors. Mesne-tenants might, if they pleased, regrant parts of their estates. And below all these classes of *free* tenants were vast numbers of *serfs*, called by various names of villeins, boors (bordarii), cottars, who had very small holdings of land; some with thirty acres and others with lesser holdings, and who had in return for this to work upon the lord's land and gather his crops for him. They were practically his property—part of his estate.

The Feudal  
System: Land  
Tenure the  
Basis.

<sup>1</sup> i.e. intermediate tenants.



We may think of it as a sort of pyramid:<sup>1</sup> serfs at the bottom; above them free tenants; minor tenants owing obedience to other greater men; at the top the tenants-in-chief holding direct from the king; the king as the apex; land, the bond which unites them and in the main settles their rights and duties. But we must not picture it as more orderly than it was. In simplest idea it was regular; in practice and working it was intolerably confused and disorderly. There were many forms of tenancy, and men owed all sorts of duties to many different persons: for example, the same man might hold some land from the king, some from the church, and some from a baron.

It is easy to see that the English came off badly in this arrangement. As the Norman friends of the king were put at the top, the English naturally sank to the bottom. Those who, in days before the Conquest, had been Many English become serfs. free, though they were owners of very small estates, now often found themselves reduced to being serfs, or, as they were sometimes called, villeins.

We must see what this meant for them. In the first place, they were no longer free. They were bound to the land and could not leave it. They were forced to work two or three days in each week on their lord's estate, without Serfs. being paid for doing so. They could not give their daughters in marriage without their lord's leave. And, beyond all this, they were in his power. He could punish them almost as he chose by fining them, or causing them to be flogged, and they could not get any redress. This was bad enough, but it was made worse by the fact that their lords were almost always foreigners. The Normans despised the English. They called them "dogs of Saxons", and treated them worse than dogs. They did not understand the English tongue, and paid no attention to what the English said or felt. William might pretend that he had, after all, only taken the place of Harold on the English throne, but to the English he was indeed a conqueror, and a very hard conqueror as well.

In this way the Feudal System, as established by King

<sup>1</sup> See diagram, p. 64. But this only gives the simple outline of what was really far more complicated.



William, bore hard on the English. We shall see that they became worse off when for a strong king was substituted a weak one. William might rule sternly, but he ruled all alike. By his gifts of land he had bound to him a body of armed followers who could defend him against any attempts of the English to drive him out. Yet he did not mean to let this armed force be used against him. He himself had been a feudal vassal before he became a feudal king. As Duke of Normandy he had been so strong in his own dominions that he could disregard his superior, the King of France, as he liked. He had even met him in battle, and had overthrown him. He had no mind to let his barons be as troublesome to him as he had been to the King of France. So he did three wise things, and, by doing so, set up a different kind of Feudalism from that which later proved such a curse to both France and Germany.

First, he gave his barons much land, but he gave it to them in scattered estates, not all together. There were indeed three exceptions: he made great earldoms in Durham, Kent, and Chester. But the earldom of Durham was given to the Bishop of Durham, who, being a Churchman, could leave no heir to inherit it; and the earldom of Kent he placed in the hands of his half-brother, Odo of Bayeux, who was also a Churchman. The earldom of Chester alone went to a layman, but no doubt William expected that his hands would be kept full enough by the need of guarding the border against the Welsh. These "palatine" earldoms were, however, the exception. As a rule estates were widely divided, with the result that, if a baron intended to rebel against the king, he could not collect his forces in one place; and he had always jealous neighbours round him who kept a watch on what he did. This division of estates was probably not a deliberate precautionary measure. Rather was it caused by the gradual nature of William's conquest of England; the great knights got grants of land in each piece of new territory conquered. But though estates were scattered, William was not saved from rebellions among his barons. In 1074 Ralf, Earl of Norfolk, and Roger, Earl of Hereford, plotted a rising while the King was away in Normandy, and invited Waltheof, Earl of Hunt-

Barons' estates scattered.

Revolt of the earls, 1074.



ingdon, the only one of the old English nobles who had retained any great amount of power, to join them. Waltheof hesitated; at first he agreed, then he drew back, and let Archbishop Lanfranc know what was going on. William was too strong and too quick for the rebels. Ralf was driven oversea, and Roger imprisoned for life, but the harshest measure fell on the unlucky Waltheof, who was beheaded. His earldom passed, with the hand of his daughter, to David, King of Scotland, and became the source of much dispute in after-days. In 1079 William had again to struggle with a rebellious feudal lord; this time his own son, Robert. The two met in battle at Gerberoi, not recognizing each other, and Robert's lance bore his father from his horse and wounded him.

Robert's  
rebellion,  
1079.

Shocked at his narrow escape from the crime of killing his father, Robert sought and received pardon, but William never trusted him again. Three years later Odo of Bayeux angered William by raising a private army to make war in Italy on his own account, and, though Odo was his half-brother and a bishop, William shut him in prison for the rest of his life.

These troubles made William see that if he was to keep his barons in order he had need to do more than merely sever their estates. Accordingly, in 1085, after "very deep speech with his Witan", he took his second great step to make his power secure; he caused to be made a great Survey in which was set down all the land of England, who held it, what it was worth in money dues, so that he might know exactly what was due to him, and so that no one might dispute over it. The results of this survey were set down in the *Domesday Book*. Two things are especially remarkable in it. It is extraordinarily thorough and minute. It tells not only the name of the holder, and from whom it was held; not only the number of villeins and servile tenants on each estate, but it even records the ploughs, oxen, horses, sheep, pigs, mills, and fishponds. One English writer thought it unworthy of a king to enquire into things like these. He says "it is shame to be telling of, but he did not think it shame to be doing it". William, however, did not feel any shame in finding out all about his kingdom, especially in order to secure for himself a steady supply of money. And, secondly,

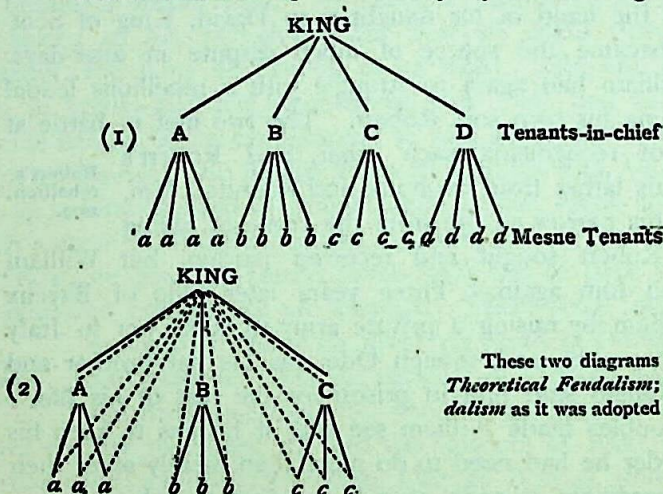
Domesday  
survey.



## 64 ENGLAND UNDER FOREIGN KINGS

though *Domesday* is more than eight hundred years old, it illustrates the amazing permanence and continuity of our rural history. Almost every obscure hamlet of to-day has its name set down in *Domesday*. The names are often somewhat changed, but that is all. The divisions of the countryside stand now as they stood in the Conqueror's reign.

William followed up the survey by his third great measure.



He summoned the free tenants of the land "that were worth aught" to a great "gemot" at Salisbury. We have no knowledge of how many came, but those that did come were made to swear allegiance to the king "that they would be faithful to him against all other men". This 'Oath of Salisbury'

The oath at Salisbury, 1086.

emphasised the fact that in the king's eyes at any rate it was the duty of every mesne-tenant to obey the king first and his feudal superior after. This policy of the king's helped to clip the wings of the great feudal nobles. On the Continent they could often defy the crown by bringing their vassals into the field. The king had no hold over the vassals, save through the feudal lord, and if the feudal lord were a rebel, he had no hold at all. But in England the nobles tended to become not so dangerous; they could not make sure of their vassals' support. Here is the real difference between English and Continental



feudalism; this is why Edward I and Edward III and Henry V were strong kings, ruling a united realm, while in France Philip IV, Charles V, and Louis XI were hampered and thwarted by half-independent feudal princes.

William did not live to reap the full benefit of these measures. In 1087 he went to war with the King of France. While his men were sacking and burning the town of Mantes, his horse, struck by a falling beam, reared and threw the king hard against the pommel of his saddle. From this hurt he never recovered, dying a few weeks after at Rouen.

Death of William, 1087.

William was a hard man, who was never held back by any ideas of mercy when he thought it needful to be stern. The harrying of Yorkshire, the laying waste of the New Forest to make himself a hunting park, the imprisonment of Odo, the execution of Waltheof, all show him ruthless, at times even cruel. Yet his strong government, rule of a foreign conqueror though it was, had one great merit that counterbalances all his harshness. He united the kingdom under his own firm sway. Under Edward the Confessor and Harold the power of the Crown had dwindled, while that of the great earls had grown. We have noticed already that Godwin and Leofric and Siward are not unlike the turbulent barons whose quarrels brought about the Wars of the Roses. This tendency to disunion and lawlessness William crushed.

And there is another side to the Norman Conquest which must not be omitted. Had the Saxons been strong and vigorous and united, they would probably have flung off the Normans. Their failure goes to show that the Saxon character had declined, or at any rate was lacking in some of the great qualities that make a nation. The invasion of the Normans, the rule of a conquering race, and the eventual fusion of Norman and Saxon blood made, out of much adversity, the "Englishman" who proved himself stiffer material than his Saxon forefathers, and possessed the enterprise and vigour which they seem to have lacked or lost.

We may pass over the reigns of William Rufus and Henry I somewhat briefly. One important class of events which we have neglected in William I's reign we will continue to set on one side;



that is, the dealings of these kings with the Church. Church affairs are best treated as a whole, leading up to the great quarrel between Henry II and Becket. Apart from these, neither William II nor Henry I calls up anything very striking. Both kings continued the policy of their father. Both had troubles with rebellious barons, and succeeded in overcoming them; both were at least as much interested in affairs in Normandy as in England.

The Conqueror had left the duchy of Normandy to his eldest son, Robert, and gave England to his second son, William. Here William Rufus, was a ready ground for quarrel, since Robert had 1087-1100.

looked to succeeding his father in both countries, As many of the barons held lands both in Normandy and England, they owed allegiance to both William and Robert; when war broke out they would have to make a choice which they would obey; and as Robert was easy-going and good-natured, while William soon showed himself to be as stern as his father, and was especially vigorous in exacting money in every way he could, a large number of barons took Robert's side. They were especially angered by what they regarded as the exactions of

Ranulf  
Flambard.

Ranulf Flambard, the king's Justiciar, that is to say, the officer who represented the king when he was absent from the kingdom. Ranulf, who was also Bishop of Durham, was careful to enforce the full payment of all the dues which belonged to the king under the feudal system; and the most profitable of these dues came when an estate passed to a minor or an heiress. Flambard used to seize for the king all the profits of the estate till the minor came of age or the heiress married; he scrupulously collected the fines or payments due on coming into an estate. These exactions were legal enough,<sup>1</sup> but Flambard's activity made them very burdensome. He made the king, it was said, "every man's heir". Thus, to guard against his discontented barons, and to help him against his brother, William was forced to make friends with his English subjects. Foreigner and Norman though he was, he had to rely on what he called his "brave and honourable English".

With their help he triumphed over his enemies. Odo of

<sup>1</sup> Save in the case of the Church (see p. 83).



## HENRY THE FIRST

67

Bayeux, Roger Montgomery, Robert of Bellême his son, Roger Mowbray, all rose against him, stirred up by the Duke of Normandy. William defeated them all. He beat back a Welsh invasion, and by promising to his barons any land they might conquer from the Welsh, he encouraged a set of warlike adventurers who would keep his frontier safe. He settled Englishmen in Cumberland the people of which were still mainly British, and as a precaution against Scottish raids he fortified Carlisle. The King of Scots, invading Northumberland out of revenge, was surprised and slain at Alnwick. William even turned the tables on his brother Robert, by leading an army in Normandy. The quarrel between the brothers was patched for the time. Duke Robert soon after fell in with the fashion of his time and made up his mind to join the Crusades. To find money to equip himself and his followers, he pledged his duchy to William for 10,000 merks, without reflecting that he was not at all likely to be either able to repay the money, or eject his brother from the duchy when once he had got a hold on it.

Rebellion, 1088.

Pledging of Normandy.

While Robert was in Palestine, William Rufus died, killed by an accident, or, as some said, murdered, while hunting in the New Forest. His death gave to Henry, the youngest and most capable of the Conqueror's sons, the unexpected chance of making himself both King of England and Duke of Normandy. England fell into his hands without much difficulty; but it was certain that when Robert came back he would have to fight hard, at any rate in Normandy, and probably in England also. Thus he, too, like Rufus, was led to trust much to his English subjects, and he did his best to win their support by marrying Matilda, daughter of the King of Scots, who was heiress of the old line of Alfred.<sup>1</sup> He also imprisoned Rufus's Justiciar, Ranulf Flambard, recalled Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, from the exile into which Rufus had driven him, and issued a Charter of Liberties, in which he promised that the "aids" taken

Henry I,  
1100-1135.Marriage with  
Matilda.

<sup>1</sup> Thus from Egbert to George V there is only a very brief gap in the blood line. The kings who do not come in are Canute, Hardicanute, Harold, William I, William II, Henry I (save by marriage), and Stephen.



from his feudal tenants should be strictly according to right, and further, that he would keep all the laws of Edward the Confessor's day.

These preparations for the storm were hardly made when the storm burst. Robert returned, and, at the invitation of some of Henry's barons, landed with an army in England. **Robert's invasion.** Henry had to buy him off by a promise of a pension, and the surrender of Normandy. This peace, however, turned out shortlived. Robert of Bellême rebelled against Henry, and managed to get Robert of Normandy to take up his side. Henceforth, from 1104 onwards, there was no peace between the brothers. In 1106 Henry defeated Robert at Tenchebrai, and took him prisoner. Robert never saw liberty again. Till his death he was held captive at Cardiff. Normandy passed into Henry's hands. Robert had left a son, William Clito, who remained to trouble Henry's peace till 1128, when he died of a wound.

Disturbed as Normandy was, England enjoyed under Henry I a rest from insurrection and war for more than thirty years. Henry used this time to strengthen the royal power against the barons.

**Royal justice.** He revived the old Shire and Hundred Courts; and not only did this make it easy for each man to get justice at home, but it also diminished the power of the feudal lords; for it curtailed the "manorial" courts where the lord, or the lord's steward, presided, whereas, in the Shire and Hundred Courts, justice was administered not by one man but by a body of free-tenants; and over the Shire Court presided the Sheriff, who was a royal officer of very wide power. Thus instead of a multitude of feudal jurisdictions, often very diverse and uncertain, and always oppressive, Henry began to substitute royal justice, which would be the same for all, in every place.

Further, since most offences were punishable by fines, justice and revenue were closely connected, and Henry I, though less oppressive in his taxation than Rufus, was quite as much alive to the advantage of a plentiful supply of money. He began his reign with the thoroughly practical step of seizing the Treasury at Winchester, and, from that time onward, never loosed his hold



over it. He found in Bishop Roger of Salisbury, an official who organized his exchequer thoroughly, and he made its power felt by sending "barons of the exchequer" on circuit through the country, thus bringing out-of-the way districts into connection with royal taxation, just as the Sheriffs made them familiar with royal justice. The exchequer.

How closely justice and revenue were connected with each other, and also with policy, is brought home to us by the King's Council. In its widest sense (the *Magnum Consilium* or *Curia Regis* as it is called) this included much the same persons as the old Saxon Witan, though with a different qualification. The Witan had been the assembly of the "Wise", and included church dignitaries, officials and chief landholders. So did the king's Council, but for another reason. To it came all the king's tenants-in-chief; and since archbishops, bishops, abbots, officials of the court, and barons were of course tenants-in-chief, we find them all in the Council just as they met in the Witan. The qualification, however, was no longer "wisdom", but the holding of land direct from the king. The King's Council.

But, of course, as a rule not a very large number would attend the meetings of the king's Council. For ordinary business it tended to consist of the great officials such as the Justiciar, who acted as regent in the king's absence, the Chancellor, who was his secretary, the Chamberlain at the head of his household, the Marshal, and the Constable, who looked after his soldiers. Yet it is a peculiarly confusing body, for it engages in so many duties under so many names. It was a council of state; it was a law court;<sup>1</sup> it collected and accounted for the revenue.<sup>2</sup> It has been aptly called a royal "court-of-all work". Ordinary business.

The explanation of this many-sidedness is found by looking at the office of king. At one time the king was head of his tribe in everything. He ruled his people, and led them in war; he was their judge and lawgiver. David, and the kings of the Iliad, are

<sup>1</sup> From this side of its activity has descended our Court of King's Bench and the term King's Counsel (K.C.).

<sup>2</sup> And was then called the Court of Exchequer. The term "Court" shows how finance and justice were entangled.



## 70 ENGLAND UNDER FOREIGN KINGS

of this type. But from very early times there was a council to help the king, and this council eventually came to wield many of the powers that were formerly the king's. Again, in course of time the work which proved too much for one man proved too much for one Council, and we get a multitude of councils and officials, each restricted to one branch; one manages justice, another revenue; a third makes laws; others attend to the army and to the navy. All are really subdivisions of the old royal authority. The king remains as the head but his powers have been split up. We see this process at work in Henry I's reign, but not in it alone. It pervades English history; it is indeed a branch of history by itself: it is *constitutional* history.

Delegation  
of royal  
power.

Failure of  
Henry's work  
owing to lack  
of a son.

Henry had shut his brother in prison and had seen his nephew slain; he had tamed his Norman barons; he had made friends with the English; his name was feared over the length and breadth of the land; he had punished ill-doers with such sternness, that he had gained the nickname of the "Lion of Justice"; yet with all this, his last days were filled with anxiety. His son had perished in a shipwreck off the Channel Islands. A daughter, Maud, was his only heir. Henry tried to secure her succession to the throne; he had made his barons swear fealty to her. But it needed little penetration to see that they would not be likely to keep their oaths, for the idea of a woman on the throne was then strange—nay almost absurd. And whether they rejected her or served her, it would be an ill day for England when the strong hand was removed and the barons were able each to do what was right in his own eyes.



## IX. Feudalism at its Worst. The “Nineteen Long Winters”

Stephen, 1135-54

When Henry I died, his plans for his daughter came to nothing. Maud was neither popular nor wise. She had married a foreigner, Geoffrey of Anjou, who was hated by the barons. Besides, no one then dreamed that a woman could be fit to rule the country. Consequently the barons, assembled in Great Council, set on the throne Stephen, Count of Blois. Maud.

Stephen was the son of Adela, William I's daughter. As a grandson of the Conqueror, he had a sound enough title to the throne. He was also, the chronicler tells us, a “mild man and a good”, so there was hope that he would be a tolerable king. His share of goodness did not turn out to be very large, but his mildness, in other words his weakness, was undeniable. And the throne was at this time no place for a mild man; what was wanted was a strong man who could keep order. Stephen.

Consequently, Stephen's reign was purely disastrous. It was one long struggle for power. First, David of Scotland burst over the border, nominally as Maud's ally. He was defeated at the Battle of the Standard, in which the barons and yeomen of Yorkshire, standing fast round a chariot on which floated the banners of St. Peter of York, St. Wilfred of Ripon, and St. John of Beverley, beat off the Scottish charges. But while the Scots were routed in the north, Maud's half-brother, Robert of Gloucester, rebelled in the west, and Stephen had to buy off David by granting Northumberland and Cumberland to his son Prince Henry. David gave up Maud's cause and went home; the part he played was not a noble one, but he was neither better nor worse than the rest; he was only fighting for his own hand. Battle of the Standard, 1138.

So far Stephen had the support of the Church, since his brother, Henry, was Bishop of Winchester and firm on his side.



He soon managed to lose this support. He demanded that the Bishops of Salisbury and Lincoln should hand over their castles to him. When they refused, he cast them into prison. This was certain to set the Church against him: but, more than that, it lost him the favour of the great officials; for this Bishop of Salisbury was that same Roger who had served Henry I so faithfully at the Exchequer, and the Bishop of Lincoln was his nephew. To quarrel with such men was sheer folly. Speedily Stephen's power slipped from him. He moved to capture the castle of Lincoln, which had been surprised by Ralf, Earl of Chester. Ralf, leaving his wife to defend the castle, gathered forces in his earldom, and, uniting with Robert of Gloucester, fell on Stephen's besieging army. A terrible conflict followed. Stephen showed that though he was a feeble king, he was a sturdy warrior. He met the Earl of Chester in fight, and, had his battle-axe not broken on the earl's helmet, might have overthrown him. As it was, his men gave way, and he was himself taken prisoner.

Maud thus became "Lady of England", but she soon proved equally unfit to rule. Haughty and wilful, without gratitude to those who had put her on the throne, she could not understand that the same people could put her off again. She, too, quarrelled with the churchmen. She was obliged to set Stephen at liberty in exchange for Robert of Gloucester, a prisoner in the hands of the other side. Soon she tasted the bitterness of defeat. She was besieged in Oxford, and only escaped by being let down at night from the walls by a rope, crossing the Thames on the ice, and fleeing across the snow. Then she gathered forces and fought again.

Yet battles and adventures, alliances and desertions, are but a part of our concern. History is sometimes written as if it were but the history of the mighty in the land; yet the case of the lowly no less deserves attention. Kings and nobles are under the fortunes of war; but the misfortunes of war lie heaviest upon the people. So it was in Stephen's reign. Rightly did the chronicler style it "the nineteen long winters". The fact was that the war went on because the barons did not wish to end it. Selfish, ambitious, merciless, unscrupulous, each baron



made himself strong in his castle, and hoped to add to his possessions by violence or treachery. Geoffrey, Earl of Essex, for instance, took his title from both parties and pillaged both. Each baron in his petty realm reigned like a tyrant, striking his own coin, declaring his own justice, oppressing the wretched people by making them work at the castles with which they filled the land. An English monk who lived at Peterborough—one of the districts which suffered worst from the tyranny of the Earl of Essex and others like him—gives a vivid description of what part of England was like. The barons "put men in prison for their gold and silver. They hanged men up by the feet and smoked them with foul smoke. Some were hanged up by their thumbs, others by the head, and burning things were hung on to their feet. They put knotted strings about their heads and writhed them till they went into the brain. They put men into prisons where adders and snakes and toads were crawling, and so tormented them. Some they put into a chest, short and narrow and not deep, that had sharp stones within, and forced men therein so that they broke all their bones." When Stephen brought over foreigners from abroad to fight for him, these behaved even worse, sacking, burning, spoiling wherever they went. "Men said that Christ and his saints slept." The poor were reduced to misery; many of them whose huts had been burnt died of cold and hunger in the fields. Yet it would be an exaggeration to say that this picture is true of all England. And it is worth remarking that Stephen's reign saw in Architecture the building of the naves of Norwich and Bury St. Edmunds, of the minster at Romsey, and of the hospital of St. Cross at Winchester, whilst in learning and literature Geoffrey of Monmouth produced his historical romances and Adelard of Bath was a student of Science and of Arabic.

The rivalry between Stephen and Maud seemed likely to be continued between their children. Fortunately for England Stephen's son died, and Stephen had no longer an interest in going on with the struggle. Once more, as so often in this reign, we have an example of the power of the churchmen; Archbishop Theobald managed to bring the two sides to terms. It was agreed by the Treaty of Wallingford, in 1153, that  
(c 271) 6-7°



Stephen should be king for the rest of his life, but that Maud's son, Henry, should succeed him. Henry had not to wait long. In 1154 Stephen died.

## X. Henry II and the Restoration of Order

Henry II had got the title of king. His life's work was spent in making that kingship a reality. He strove to make himself supreme in his kingdom, and what he did includes a great success and a great failure. Over the barons he triumphed; the Church, on the other hand, worsted him. We have to deal in succession with these two struggles, and we may leave a third aspect of his greatness, his position as a Continental ruler, to lead on to the exploits of his warrior son, Richard Cœur de Lion.

To understand the reasons of his strength, it is necessary to look for a moment beyond England. His father, Geoffrey of Anjou, was one of a family that, like the Norman dukes, had been fertile in strong men, men who had united warlike daring with the ruthlessness and unscrupulousness by which a feudal vassal of the King of France could make himself as strong as his master.<sup>1</sup> Geoffrey had not been able to do very much in England, where even Maud's followers feared and disliked him. But he had reduced Normandy, and when he died, in 1151, he left Henry, then eighteen years of age, the ruler of Normandy, and Count of Anjou, Maine, and Touraine. The next year Henry married Eleanor, divorced wife of Louis VII, and thereby became Duke of Aquitaine, Count of Poitou, Toulouse, Saintonge, and Limousin, with a suzerainty over all the countries west of the Rhone. As he made good these

<sup>1</sup> Mr. J. R. Green has pointed out how typical their castle at Anjou is of the family. The castle (what remains of it) is a huge, hideous, black pile which seems to scowl down at the town.



dominions against the King of France, he was, even before he became King of England, the mightiest uncrowned head in Europe. If we add that he was skilled in war, adroit in diplomacy, full of restless energy and fiery temper, never for a moment idle, knowing well how to use his own time and how to make others work for him, it is plain that the barons would

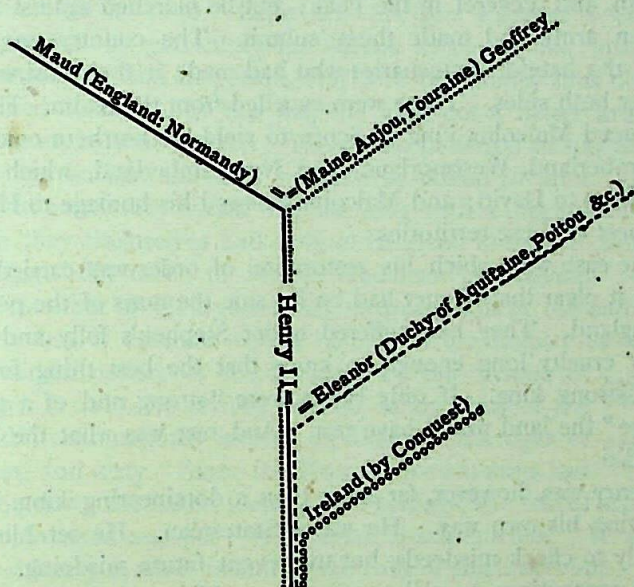


Diagram illustrating the aggregation of power in Henry II's hands.

find him widely different from the "mild and good" King Stephen.

Henry's general policy was to undo all that Stephen had done. The first thing was to restore the royal revenue. Stephen had allowed two-thirds of it to dwindle away by quarrelling with the bishops and so upsetting the management of the exchequer, and by granting crown lands to his friends; and the little that Stephen had not spent Maud had scattered. Henry took back the crown lands, and restored Nigel, Bishop of Ely (Roger of Salisbury's nephew), to his familiar place in the exchequer. He stopped

Restoration of  
revenue and de-  
struction of castles.



the practice of barons issuing their own coin, put out a good coinage of his own, and took stern measures with any who adulterated it. He pulled down many hundreds of those oppressive castles which the barons had built in defiance of law. He recovered the royal castles which were in baronial hands. Of the barons, Mortimer held out on the west border, Aumale in Scarborough, and Peverel in the Peak; but he marched against them with an army and made them submit. The country was still full of the hateful mercenaries who had made it their business to plunder both sides. These were expelled from the realm. Henry also forced Malcolm, king of Scots, to yield the northern counties of Cumberland, Westmorland, and Northumberland, which had been given to David; and Malcolm renewed his homage to Henry in respect of these territories.

The ease with which his restoration of order was carried out makes it clear that Henry had on his side the mass of the people of England. They had suffered under Stephen's folly and the barons' cruelty long enough to know that the best thing for all was a strong king. If only Henry were "strong and of a good courage" the land would have rest. And rest was what the land needed.

Henry was, however, far more than a domineering king, bent on having his own way. He was a Statesman. He set himself not only to check misdeeds, but to prevent future misdoing. He sought precautions as well as remedies. His authority might be recovered by force, but it must be maintained by law. Thus, while he strengthened his army, he also took pains to strengthen his law courts.

Hitherto the weakness of the feudal army had been twofold. First, there was the danger of mutiny or neglect. If the king was weak, the baron would not come: or perhaps he came with only a part of his proper followers. But even when the king was, like Henry, strong enough to compel attendance, there was another fatal defect: the tenant was only bound to serve for forty days in the year. It was impossible to carry on a campaign, especially when sieges were long and tiresome, with soldiers who went home again after a little more than a month in the field. So Henry relied more on soldiers whom he

Feudal army.

came with only a part of his proper followers. But

even when the king was, like Henry, strong enough to compel attendance, there was another fatal defect: the tenant was only bound to serve for forty days in the year. It was impossible to carry on a campaign, especially when sieges were long and tiresome, with soldiers who went home again after a little more than a month in the field. So Henry relied more on soldiers whom he



paid to fight for him. He used a plan, begun in his grandfather's time, of taking a tax called "scutage",<sup>1</sup> a payment imposed on each "knight's fee"—that is to say, the holding of land which would be liable to provide him with a knight and his proper attendants for service in war. Henry made use of this method when he was planning a distant expedition to Toulouse in 1159. Later on, his son Richard I enlarged the practice by permitting his barons to pay a fine instead of accompanying him in person, and with the money thus obtained he hired soldiers. In this way the king got a better army and the barons became weaker. Those who preferred to stay at home grew less warlike and their vassals less skilled in arms. If they were to rebel they would find the king with a disciplined force, while they themselves had only a band of ill-trained followers. "Scutage" did much to weaken feudalism in England.

The other of Henry's military measures falls at the end of his reign; but it deserves notice here as it too helped to weaken the warlike powers of the barons. By the "Assize of Arms", in 1181, he revived the old Saxon army of the "fyrd", that national levy of all between the ages of sixteen and sixty. Since the Norman men-at-arms had ridden down the Saxon footmen at Hastings, the feudal army had been favoured and the "fyrd" used less frequently. It was the day of heavy cavalry: infantry were held of small account. None the less, the "fyrd" had been called out at times of pressing need, and had done good service both against the Scots, and against rebellious barons in 1173-4. The Assize of Arms laid down that every freeman was to possess certain weapons, and these were to be inspected at intervals to see that they were in good order. This force of freemen was the origin of our militia. Henceforth for service abroad the king tended to replace the feudal knights by trained mercenaries, and to defend England against the foreign invader or rebellious barons he relied partly on the militia. Thus the old feudal levy was less needed. Feudalism by slow degrees lost its military character, became less dangerous to the Crown, and eventually sank into a method of holding land.

One of the greatest marks of the disorder of Stephen's time

<sup>1</sup>i.e. a "shield tax".



had been the increase of feudal jurisdictions, the growth, that is to say, of barons' courts, in which the king's law was set aside by a baron's private regulations. In days when communication through the country was difficult and slow, there was always trouble in keeping the local courts connected with the central courts. It was to tighten this connection that sheriffs (royal officers) had been placed over the shire courts, while Henry I had sent round from the exchequer "travelling barons" who, first attending to matters of revenue, dealt also with matters of law. But while under King Stephen each did what was right in his own eyes, the connection between the central and local courts had almost perished. Henry II set himself to bring the local courts again under royal control. Unless the king's law ran through the length and breadth of the land, the king's power would be but a shadow.

The illegal baronial courts could easily be destroyed by the hand that was strong enough to pull down the illegal baronial castles. But something had to be put in their place: it is generally far easier to destroy than to construct. And the fact that Henry succeeded in his constructive measures does far more to prove him a great statesman than any of his purely destructive work.

Instead of attempting to make anything new, Henry took hold of a Saxon institution and bent it to a new shape. As we have seen, Saxon justice had been accustomed to the idea of an association of men who *represented* their district, whether it was the shire or the hundred, either to give information on oath, or to do justice. Representatives of the "tunmoots" sat in the hundred courts; representatives of the hundred in the shire courts; *Domesday Book* itself had been based on the evidence collected from sworn representatives. And it was from this idea of representation that Henry developed the jury system.

The first step was the revival of his grandfather's plan of sending judges from the king's court to the local courts. These justices *in eyre*<sup>1</sup> still combined a care for the revenue with the task of bringing the king's justice home to all. But an important step forward

Revival  
of royal  
justice.

Idea of repre-  
sentatives.

Justices in eyre  
and jury of  
presentment.

<sup>1</sup> An abbreviation of *in itinere* (on circuit).



was taken by the Assize of Clarendon in 1166, when it was ordered that these justices were to be met in each county by twelve legal men from the hundred, and four from the tunship, who were to "present" to them notorious malefactors. These persons did not indeed try the accused: they formed a jury "of presentment" (the origin of the modern "grand jury"), whose task it is to decide whether a man ought to be tried for any offence. The real trial was by the ordeal of water,<sup>1</sup> and if the accused failed to get through that he was condemned. Yet even when he came off triumphant from the Ordeal he was to leave the country within forty days. If the case against him was so strong that the sworn men "presented" him for trial, it was considered that he was at any rate an undesirable person to keep in the country.

This use of a jury, as laid down in the Assize of Clarendon, and repeated in the Assize of Northampton (1176), applied only to criminal matters. But in civil cases too a jury might <sup>Use of a jury.</sup> be employed, though only as an alternative. The other choice, however, was the Norman scheme of "trial by battle", and this was generally disliked, not only because it was un-English (for it was not a native institution), but because it gave an overwhelming advantage to the man best trained in arms, and so was unfair. In the eyes of men of simple faith "thrice is he armed who hath his quarrel just"; but such simplicity of faith was rare, for the very good reason that its belief so often led to the wrong man winning the day. If all that justice can do is to declare that "might is right", then justice may as well stand aside altogether, for the same end will be reached without its meddling. As a substitute for this barbarous plan, the system of settling civil cases by a jury, cumbrous and expensive as it was at first, since it involved taking the case to the King's Court, proved to be the beginning of a valuable reform.

The conclusion of the matter lies outside the reign of Henry II; but as he was the father of the English jury, it is well to join with his name the perfecting of the work he began. From

<sup>1</sup> The accused had to dip his hand into boiling water and take out a stone from the bottom of the vessel. The hand was then tied up for a time (usually seven days), and if, when the bandages were taken off, it was found to be clean, the man was held acquitted.



admitting that after all Might was not Right, it was but a short step to agree that Chance was not Justice. Trial by battle fell into disuse, and soon afterwards trial by Ordeal followed it. In 1216 the Church forbade the further use of Ordeal, and in its place came the "petty jury", a body of twelve men drawn from the neighbourhood, who were to deliver a verdict<sup>1</sup> on the charge before them. At first they were chosen for their presumed knowledge of the accused's crime; and if they could not agree, others were added till twelve were found of one mind. It was only by slow degrees that the functions of witness and juryman were kept apart; and for a long time the accused could not call witnesses for himself, or have anyone to defend him, since the jury, being themselves witnesses, were supposed to know all there was to be known without outside assistance: but, imperfect as the jury was in its beginnings, it grew till it became one of the greatest safeguards of English liberty.

Hitherto we have seen nothing but Henry's triumphs: we have seen him strike down disorder as personified by the barons; we have seen him strengthen and widen the royal justice till it became so formidable that the proudest noble dared not defy it, and so far-reaching that the meanest freeman could be sure of its protection. But there was yet one body over which the royal justice had no authority. It is Henry's attempt to enforce his authority over the Church that must next occupy us.

Royal law  
supreme over  
all except the  
churchmen.

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## XI. Monarchy and Church: Henry and Becket

The quarrel between Henry II and Becket had its roots deep in the past. To understand it we must trace the history of the dealings of the Crown with the Church since that Norman Conquest which had made so many great changes in England.

We have already spoken of that school of Cluniac monks

<sup>1</sup> i.e. a "true saying".



which had striven to set up a purer standard of life and duty in the Church.<sup>1</sup> One result of their efforts has been already remarked—the increased reputation of the monks who led strict lives, and the decline from favour of secular and parish clergy, who were less particular. Their objects and those of other Church Reformers may be defined as follows.

Objects of  
the  
Reformers.

They saw with alarm that churchmen were every year becoming more involved in affairs of the world, more occupied with the administering of wide estates and the gathering of riches, more concerned with the cares of state, more interested in keeping themselves on an equality with the great nobles. They felt that the world was mastering the spirit, the thorns choking the wheat. It was needful to cut off this connection with the world. Thus they strove to make the clergy *celibate*, because they thought that marriage entangled men in worldly concerns; they cried out against the offence of *simony*, because when men could buy promotion or office in the church, they were led to covet riches, or be unduly influenced by them; and (though this came later) they objected to churchmen receiving offices at the hands of laymen. *Lay investiture*, as this was called, was an abuse, because it was likely that laymen were often guided in their choice by unworthy reasons. Churchmen would be appointed to livings, preferments, bishoprics, and so forth, not for their zeal or piety, but because they were popular and easy-going; they would thus be tempted to work for the favour of men, not for the cause of God.

All of these objects were very laudable in themselves, and to the first two no objection could reasonably be raised. That the clergy should be celibate was an old rule which had been somewhat loosely kept, and clerical marriages caused great scandal. Simony was an offence that the Church had long battled with, having complete right on its side. But to attack lay investiture was another matter. The Reformers wished to cut the Church loose from all lay control, to make it a body apart, independent, an *imperium in imperio*. But the fact was that the greater churchmen, the bishops and abbots, held large masses of landed property. Herein lay the wealth of their sees and foundations; and as landowners they

Difficulties in  
the way of  
abolishing lay  
investiture.

<sup>1</sup> See page 39.



owed duties to the state like other landowners. They had no claim to escape taxation or the task of sending tenants to fight in the field. If these reformers wished the Church to be entirely free from the world, it might be urged that the Church must abandon the wealth that bound it to the world. This, of course, it had no intention of doing.

The most distinguished of these reformers was Hildebrand, who, after being the trusted adviser of two popes, became himself Pope in 1073, under the title of Gregory VII.

Hildebrand  
(Gregory VII)  
and William I.

He entered with immense vigour on the work of making the Church independent of all kings and princes. And he claimed—and exercised—the right of excommunicating and deposing rulers who defied him. He embarked in a desperate quarrel with the Emperor, Henry IV, which lasted all their lives, and survived them to convulse Europe for many years.

Oddly enough, Gregory did not attempt to check William the Conqueror, who was in the habit of “investing” his own bishops, and had declared that no Pope’s bulls or decrees should be obeyed in England unless he himself gave leave.<sup>1</sup> Even when Gregory demanded homage, and William had refused, because no king of England had ever paid it before, Gregory gave way. He did so, no doubt, because he saw in William a king who, unlike most of the kings of the time, was really trying to improve his Church. William, too, had, of his own accord, taken a step which must have delighted Gregory. When he came to the throne, he had found the bishops accustomed

William estab-  
lishes Church  
Courts in  
England.

to sit in the Shire Courts, and having churchmen and ecclesiastical offenders tried before them there, just like laymen, and under the same law. William had withdrawn the bishops from the Shire Courts; he had replaced the English bishops by Normans; and he had permitted them to have courts of their own in which they tried and punished their own offenders under their own “canon” law. Church matters which had hitherto been discussed by a mixture of laymen and churchmen in the Witan were now transferred to a synod in which laymen had no place. As William had also appointed Lanfranc as Archbishop of Canterbury, and sup-

<sup>1</sup> Eadmer, the sole contemporary authority, states that this claim was an innovation.



ported him in his efforts to make the clergy put away their wives and do their duty, Gregory probably felt that it would be a mistake to do anything that might stir up a quarrel with him, even though he did refuse homage and claim to appoint bishops himself.

William Rufus, however, proved equally obstinate and far less honest of purpose. He was intensely greedy of money, and he and his Justiciar, Ranulf Flambard, strained every means to amass it. Under the feudal system large payments were always due to the feudal superior, in many cases the king, when one of his tenants died. There were *heriots* to be taken from the dead man's estate, and *reliefs* to be paid by the heir; if the heir was a minor, the administration of his estate came into the king's hands, and good profits might be drawn from it. Rufus and Flambard cast covetous eyes on the Church. Church lands did not pay heriots or reliefs, but if when an office fell vacant, it were not filled at once, the king might easily lay hands on the revenue that came in during the vacancy. Hence arose a practice of keeping offices vacant for a considerable time. This gross abuse came to a head in 1089, when Lanfranc died, and no successor was appointed to his Archbishopric. Four years passed away, and, to the scandal of everyone, the Church in England was still left without a head, in order that the king might pocket its revenues.

William II's  
quarrel with  
Anselm.

In 1093 Rufus fell sick, and, believing himself to be dying, he wished to make his peace with Heaven. Accordingly he appointed Anselm, Abbot of Bec, to the Archbishopric. However unworthy the motive, the choice was excellent. Anselm won the respect of all by his learning, righteousness, and tenderness. As it happened, however, William did not die, and as his health grew better, his conduct grew worse; penitence soon vanished; blasphemous and brutal habits returned. From the first Anselm had foreseen that there was trouble in store for him. "Will ye yoke me, a weak old sheep, with that fierce young bull, the King of England," said he, when he was first offered the primacy. But, although so modest, Anselm would never yield to threats. He refused to make Rufus any payment for his appointment, but gave the money in charity instead. When Pope Urban sent over the "pall", or scarf of office, Anselm would not receive



## HENRY AND BECKET

it at the king's hands, but took it himself from the high altar at Canterbury. He rebuked the misdoings of the king and the Court, and so angered William that his life was scarcely safe. He had at length to leave the kingdom.

One of Henry I's earliest and most popular acts was to recall Anselm from his exile. But though Henry was reasonable and just, yet even he could not agree with Anselm. Their dispute never ripened into a quarrel, none the less it was a hot dispute. Indeed agreement was scarce possible, for Anselm had been at Rome and had returned more than ever strong against lay investiture. When first appointed by Rufus he had paid homage, but he now refused this homage to Henry; and when Henry invested bishops he would not consecrate them. Yet Henry could not allow his archbishops and bishops to be altogether independent of him, for churchmen in those days were among the greatest landowners; if they claimed to be invested by the Pope they would soon claim to hold not only their spiritual powers, but also their lands, from the Pope. If they did so, England would be split up between laymen owning, as Englishmen, allegiance to an English king, and churchmen, of no nationality, only owning a foreigner, the Pope, as their master. No king could suffer this.

Here we come, not to a quarrel between two men, but a divergence between two great institutions. The Church was advancing claims which the Crown could not grant. It was only the first of a long series; we shall see the difference at times widen, at times almost close up, but it was never quite healed, and it eventually led to the great breach which we call the Reformation.

In this matter of investitures there was a good deal to be said on both sides. Henry and Anselm settled it in a reasonable way by a compromise. Bishops and abbots were to be chosen by their cathedral chapter and by their monks respectively, but the election was to be held in the king's court. They were to receive the ring which stood for their union with their flock, and the pastoral staff which represented the shepherd's care over his sheep, from the Church, because these things were symbols of their spiritual power; but

Recall of  
Anselm by  
Henry I.

Compromise  
about investi-  
tures.



they were to pay homage for their worldly possessions to the king, who was their master in respect of the world. This compromise worked well, and was afterwards adopted by the Pope and emperor as the right settlement of their dispute also.

In King Stephen's reign, as we have seen, the quarrel with the Bishops of Salisbury and Lincoln was one of the causes of Matilda's triumph; later on he quarrelled with the Church over the appointment to the Archbishopric of York. His reign witnessed an increase in the power of the Church. While the barons were fighting with their king and each other, the Church was steadily working towards that independence from lay control which it desired.

Thus Henry II had to fight the matter over again, though this time on new ground, and the struggle was even more violent than in William II's day. For, though Henry had <sup>Henry II and Becket.</sup> reason on his side, which William had not, yet the one king was fully as hot-tempered and impatient as the other, while on the side of the Church, instead of the gentle, patient Anselm, stood Becket, at least as fiery, wilful, and rash of speech as his royal master.

Not the least irritating of Becket's qualities in the king's eyes was his apparent ingratitude. Henry had raised Becket from an obscure station. He had made a personal friend of <sup>Becket's character and early career.</sup> him, had joked and feasted in his company, had made him his Chancellor, and consulted with him on all the measures needed to bring the realm into order, and believed him to be heart and soul with him. Thus, when the Archbishopric of Canterbury fell vacant, giving the king the chance of putting in a man to forward his ideas, none seemed so suitable as Becket. But Becket objected, avowedly because his first duty was to the Church and he would never allow himself to be used as a tool to bring it under royal control. He therefore hesitated to accept. "If this be done," said he, "our friendship will soon turn to bitter hate." Yet the king persisted in his idea that Becket's usefulness to him would be increased if he were Archbishop.

Once consecrated, Becket resigned his Chancellorship, justifying himself with the words, "Man cannot serve two



## HENRY AND BECKET

masters". This was but a foretaste of the mixture of zeal and want of tact which was to distinguish the rest of his career. He might have made plain his wish henceforth to serve God without likening the service of his royal master and friend to that of Mammon. But Becket never did anything by halves. Hitherto, though he had always led a pure and honest life, he had been luxurious and worldly; suddenly he turned into an ascetic of the severest type, fasting with extreme rigour, wearing a hair-shirt, washing the feet of the sick and the poor. Yet Becket's change was no hypocrisy. He was a man who had taken up a new duty, and he meant to perform it with all his might. He was determined to preserve intact the Church's rights. The fact that in doing so he would come into collision with the king did not turn him aside for a moment.

We recall that Henry II's chief aim was to destroy all those privileges and immunities which hindered the king's law; we know that owing to William I's change the Church was the one really great institution which still held these privileges; we can see that it was inevitably over this point that the battle would arise.

The provocation was not long in coming. Clerics who had committed crimes were still tried in ecclesiastical courts. In

**Criminous** 1163 (the year after Becket became Archbishop) Henry, **clerks.** angry at a cleric having been sentenced for a murder to a

very trifling punishment, required that the clergy should obey the "customs of the realm". To this Becket verbally agreed, but as the "customs" were not very certain, a commission was appointed

**The Constitutions** by the king to draw them up. This commission **of Clarendon, 1164.** produced the celebrated *Constitutions of Clarendon*.

Some old rules were repeated; clerics were not to leave the king's realm without his leave, and appeals were not to be taken to Rome, but to be heard before the king: the agreement made between Henry I and Anselm about investitures and homage was re-enacted. A new order was made that villeins might not enter the service of the Church without leave of their lords. On the chief matter in dispute it said that clerics who had committed crimes—"criminous clerks"—having been tried in the ecclesiastical courts *and degraded from their orders* (as they would be, if



found guilty), should be then handed over to the king's courts for sentence. There was no idea of the king's courts sentencing a *clerk*; having been degraded he would be no longer a clerk but a layman.

We might think this of small consequence; we wonder why clerics should object to the royal justice, and why the king should distrust Church courts; we presume that the number of clerics who commit crimes would be very small. Such notions are misleading.

The king was in no way hostile to the Church courts as such. But he wished clerks who had been found guilty of felony in them to be sentenced in lay courts and so made liable to exactly the same penalties as other criminals. For the Church courts had no power of life and death. Their punishments were limited to ordering penances, which, however severe, could not meet cases of murder. The result was an inequality of justice. A layman who murdered was hanged; a cleric was merely degraded and put to penance. Again, we are led to wonder why churchmen, who at this time especially were anxious to purify and raise their order, should desire to protect their guilty members. The explanation lies in the same desire which we have noticed before: to sever their order from the lay world, and exalt it by the severance. If a cleric were degraded from his orders, this, they held, should be punishment enough. If he were submitted to the ordinary courts, it would be an admission that he was no better than an ordinary man, and he would be punished twice for the same offence.

**Inadequacy of Church courts in criminal matters.**

We must remember that in the Middle Ages the term "cleric" included a far larger class than it does nowadays. It embraced not only what we call the clergy, but all sorts of men in "minor orders"—exorcists, acolytes, readers, sacristans, subdeacons—all who were engaged in the service of the Church, or who were intending to enter its orders, and had taken what was called the first tonsure. It was as if we were now to extend the term "clergy" to all the officials of a cathedral—the vergers and beadles, the singing men in the choir, and so forth. All the clerks of the king's Chancery were clerics. Indeed, practically, all the profes-

**Wide signification of term "cleric".**



## HENRY AND BECKET

sional classes, except soldiers and lawyers, were clerics. To some of these their orders meant little, save an exemption from the royal courts and a certainty of light punishment in cases of misdoing. Consequently clerical offenders were far from being as rare as might be expected. And as the Church courts claimed to try not only cases where a cleric was the accused party, but also any case in which a cleric was concerned, the number of cases withdrawn from the royal courts and dealt with by courts that could not inflict meet punishment was exceedingly large.

The issue, then, between Henry and his Archbishop, was of wide concern to both sides. When the Constitutions were produced it was three days before Becket could be induced to agree to them. At last he did agree owing to the pressure of the Bishops and the two senior earls present. But then Becket refused to seal the document—and without sealing it remained invalid. Then he was summoned to answer a charge that the Archbishop's court had failed in justice in a land plea. Instead of appearing in person, he sent four knights to answer for him. He was then summoned to a council at Northampton to answer the original charge, and a further one of contempt of the king's court. Becket appeared in full robes clasping a crucifix. After the real business of the court had been disposed of, the king brought against him a series of charges relating to his conduct as Chancellor, and demanded an account of the moneys that had passed through his hands. Becket protested against Henry's injustice and appealed to Rome—for this he was condemned by the Assembly. Becket's withdrawal. "This is a fearful day," said one of his trembling followers. "Ay," retorted Thomas, "but the Day of Judgment will be more fearful." He fled from the town at dead of night, and escaped to France.

Leaves the kingdom, 1164.

Then began six years of incessant struggle. Becket sought help from Pope Alexander III, but Alexander himself, being persecuted by the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, dared not affront Henry by supporting Becket too warmly. Henry, on the other hand, pursued the fight vigorously by exiling the Archbishop's kinsfolk, and by seizing the revenues of Canterbury.



Becket replied by excommunicating Henry's ministers and bishops, and so the fight went on.

At last, in 1170, a truce was made, and Becket returned to the kingdom on the understanding that he was to let bygones be bygones. But, just before his return, Henry had caused his son to be crowned. To crown a king was a privilege of the Archbishops of Canterbury, but as Becket was in disgrace Henry had made Becket's enemies, Roger of York, and the Bishop of London, perform the ceremony. Becket, on his return, suspended them both. This threw Henry into one of his violent rages. All the trouble taken to have his son crowned was wasted through Becket's act. On hearing the news, Henry cried out: "Are there none of the dastards eating my bread who will rid me of this turbulent priest?" Immediately four knights started for England, resolved to carry out the king's wish by some means, fair or foul. After a stormy interview with Becket in his palace, they followed him armed into the Cathedral. Fierce words passed, and Becket retorted no less fiercely. A scuffle began. Becket was struck and retaliated, and then one of the knights drew his sword; the rest did the same, and the Archbishop was murdered beside his own altar steps.

Return of  
Becket,  
and his  
murder,  
1170.

Becket straightway became a martyr. If ever a dead man won a fight, it was he. Henry, who had many advantages of reason and justice on his side, lost most of them by his own frantic words and the more frantic interpretation which the four knights placed on them. Henceforward the one thing to do was to yield. He swore his innocence, and at a later date even submitted to be scourged by the monks of Canterbury at Becket's tomb. But all hope of asserting his full power over the Church courts was gone. Not till the Reformation did the royal power prevail, and for more than three centuries criminous clerks continued to be sentenced in their own courts, and what was more important, the door was opened to fresh inroads by the popes. The humbling of King John, the plundering taxation of Henry III's day were indirectly due to Becket's martyrdom. But Henry did not lose all his powers. He was able to preserve some control of appeals to Rome, to check in certain

Results of  
the struggle.



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matters any further increase in the jurisdiction of the Church courts, and elections to bishoprics were conducted as before in the king's chapel and, therefore, under the king's influence.

For the rest of Henry's life, trouble was ever hard at hand. The great barons who had trembled before him lost their

Rebellions of  
Henry's sons and  
great barons.

respect for a king who had been worsted by the Church. Men like Hugh of Chester, Hugh Bigod, and Robert Mowbray were very ready to rebel against a king whose life's work had been spent in the effort to tame their powers. His children, too, plotted against him. Even his wife deserted him. Rebellion was soon on foot both in England and oversea. The Scots crossed the border. The King of France gave help to the rebels. From this accumulation of dangers Henry seemed scarce likely to escape, yet he had stout friends, and the people of England stood by him. They at least had no wish to see the barons lift their heads again. Thus, by the aid of his militia the rebel Earls of Leicester and Norfolk were beaten in the Battle of Fornham, and the peasantry took care that none of the fugitives escaped alive. The King of Scots, William the Lion, was surprised and made prisoner at Alnwick. He was not allowed to go until he had, by the Treaty of Falaise, paid homage to the King of England as his feudal superior, and put in his hands the castles of Edinburgh, Stirling, Roxburgh, Jedburgh, and Berwick (1174). Abroad, Henry with his army of mercenaries soon forced the French king to sue for peace.

Yet, even so, the old king had little rest. His sons quarrelled like young lions over the division of his inheritance. The eldest, Henry, till his death in 1183, plotted constantly with the kings of France against his father. Geoffrey provoked his barons in Brittany to incessant quarrels till death too removed him. Richard took up his elder brother's game, joined the King of France, actually led an army against his father, and forced

Death of  
Henry II,  
1189.

him to make a degrading peace. The last blow was the discovery that his youngest, his favourite son, John, had joined the rebellion. Smitten with fever, the old king turned his face to the wall, murmuring "Shame, shame on a conquered king", and so passed away.



## XII. The Angevin Power: Richard and the Crusades

Amid the engrossing importance of what Henry did at home we have had little leisure to attend to what Henry was abroad. Yet in the eyes of any but an Englishman, Henry was of greater consequence as a European ruler than as an English king. Through his father he ruled Anjou; through his mother, Normandy; through his wife, Aquitaine, being thus master of the western half of France:<sup>1</sup> we have also seen (p. 90) that he established his claim to be considered paramount over Scotland; and we may add, what has hitherto been passed over, that he had in a sense conquered Ireland. As early as 1155 Henry had sought papal sanction for an expedition against Ireland (the Papacy claimed dominion over all islands), and Adrian IV, the only Englishman who ever was a Pope, is said to have granted him a licence on condition that he would hold the country as a papal fief. Owing to the opposition of his mother, the Empress Matilda, and to other difficulties, Henry abandoned the project, and did not return to it till 1169, when an unexpected opportunity presented itself. Ireland had never united, but was still split up among rival kings. One of these, Dermot, King of Leinster, was driven from Ireland by Roderic O'Connor, who claimed kingship over the whole island. Dermot fled to England and sought aid from Henry II. Henry, too busy to undertake the task himself, allowed Dermot to get what help he could from the barons. These were ready enough for any adventure, and one of them, Richard de Clare, sometimes called Strongbow, helped Dermot to rout his enemies, and by marrying Dermot's heiress succeeded to his kingdom on Dermot's death. Henry, somewhat alarmed lest his vassals should become independent, crossed over to Ireland. A satisfactory number of Irish kings

Henry's  
continental  
power.

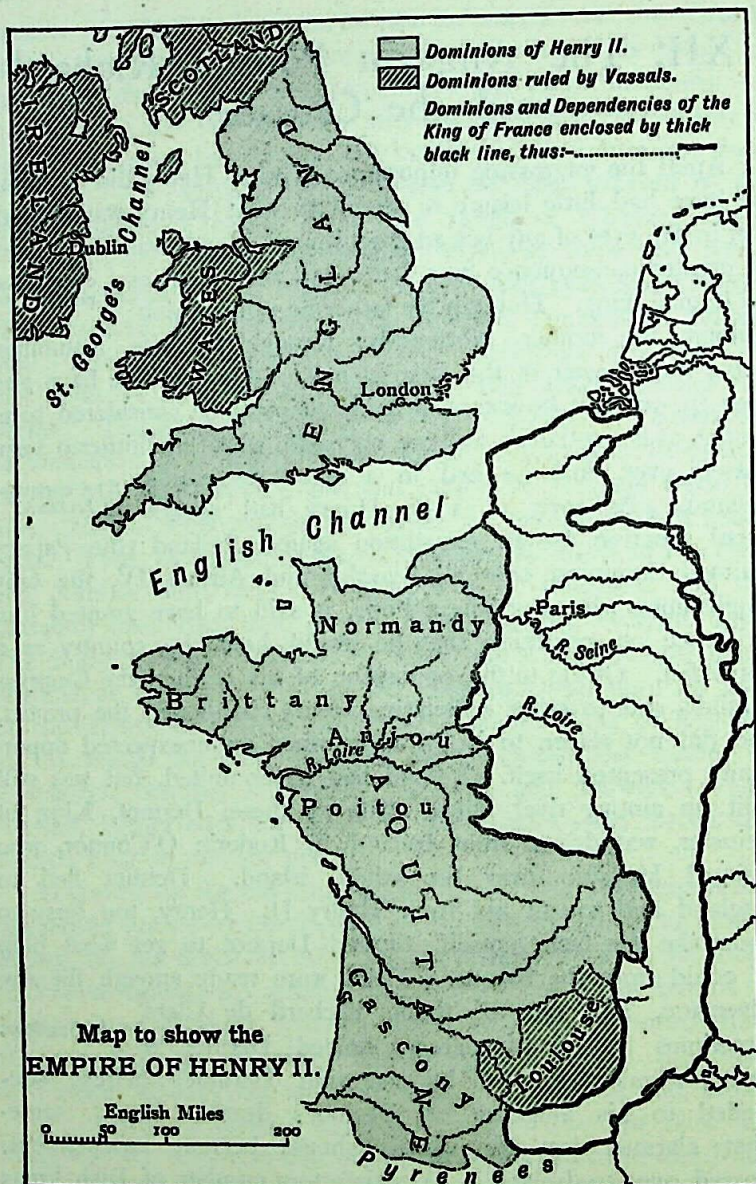
The conquest  
of Ireland.

Strongbow.

<sup>1</sup> The marriage of his son, Geoffrey, with Constance of Brittany brought this duchy into the Angevin power, and made Henry II's dominions extend from the Somme to the Pyrenees in a continuous line.



# RICHARD AND THE CRUSADES





paid him homage, and meant nothing by it. As a matter of fact his authority stretched no farther than the Normans could conquer, namely, the district round Dublin and Wexford, called the English "pale". Beyond that the Irish ruled and quarrelled as before, but Henry had at any rate added a new title. He was Lord of Ireland.

So powerful a sovereign was not likely to lack suitable marriages for his daughters. One married Henry the Lion, Duke of Saxony, another married the King of Castile. Thus the family, sprung from the counts of the little province of Anjou, had gained a position in Europe not unlike that won in later days by the counts of an obscure Austrian territory of Habsburg. But there was another branch of the Angevins, which had acquired by marriage a title to the kingdom of Jerusalem; and to the story of the Crusades and of the part which the Angevin Richard Cœur de Lion played in them we must now turn.

In the year 635 Jerusalem, hitherto belonging to the Christian Empire of the East, had fallen into the hands of the Arabs, but the way to the holy places had not been shut by this conquest. Christian pilgrims had been allowed to come and go at all seasons, and especially to the great Easter Fair at Jerusalem, with no other hindrance than the payment of the usual tolls which travellers always paid in alien lands. In the eleventh century, however, a fresh horde of Eastern invaders swept over Syria, of a fiercer type than the Arabs. These were the Seljuk Turks. When they conquered Jerusalem in 1076 they began a policy of persecution. Christians were robbed, insulted, sometimes murdered. A pilgrim who visited the Holy Land did so at the risk of his life.

Stories of Turkish brutality flowed westwards and fell on ears open to catch them. It is easy to misunderstand and even to resent that policy of the Church, which aimed at setting it free from the control of kings, striving to exalt the Pope at their expense, but that is partly because we look at it from the modern standpoint of the *nation*. To a Briton, or a Frenchman, or a German, his own nation is everything; "Europe" is but a name. But in the eleventh century the idea of nationality



was vague. At the time England had scarcely emerged from being a conquered people, and France was divided, Spain was divided, Italy was divided, Germany was divided. There were no "nations" as we know them. All European monarchs, instead of regarding themselves as separate heads of separate nations, thought of themselves as members of one great body—"Christendom". And Christendom had badges of unity, its temporal head the Emperor, its spiritual head the Pope—the twin champions of Christendom. "Behold here are Two Swords"; at times one sword was turned against the other, but against the infidel both could unite. As it was a matter touching the faith, the popes should take the lead. To do them justice they did not shrink from the task. And it was no light task to end the jarring wars of greed and selfishness at home, and send forth men of all races, to fight side by side for Christendom.

The policy of Christendom against the infidel.

There was another motive besides zeal for the faith on which the popes could rely: this was the spirit of adventure. To undertake a difficult and dangerous enterprise, to rescue the downtrodden, to go where blows fell thickest, even though the reward was but empty renown, was the duty of the knight, the spirit of what a later age called "chivalry". And so when, at the Council of Clermont in 1095, Pope Urban II preached the Crusade, he had no lack, not merely of hearers, but doers, of the Word. Some in impetuous zeal even hurried off unarmed, a mere rabble, and perished by the way, but they were followed by a disciplined force including the bravest knights in Christendom. Jerusalem was taken in 1099, and Godfrey de Bouillon was chosen as its ruler. Unhappily the mere love of fighting had mastered other feelings in the Crusaders' hearts. Even a good and virtuous knight like Godfrey, too pious to wear a crown of gold where once Christ had worn a crown of thorns, had no spirit of mercy. He, like the rest, regarded himself as an avenger. Without shrinking, he took his share in the hideous massacres, even of women and children, that followed the storming of Jerusalem. And this pitiless fury turned too against the Jews. Not merely in Palestine but in distant parts of Europe, they were plundered

The first Crusade, 1099.



and ill-treated by kings and barons. The result of this violence reacted on the Christian kingdom in Palestine. Founded on force, it could only be upheld by force. The Crusaders were no more than a garrison in a hostile country, whose power was maintained by their castles and their strong arms. The kingdom of Jerusalem.

For a time the Crusaders held their own. Godfrey died, and was succeeded by his brother, Baldwin: he by a second Baldwin. Then there was none left but a daughter of Baldwin I. She was married to Fulk of Anjou, King Henry II of England's grandfather. Thus Fulk became king in Jerusalem, and so set up the Angevin dynasty there.

Years passed by. A second Crusade, led by Louis VII of France and the Emperor of the West, failed to enlarge or strengthen the Christian power in Palestine. And then the Moslems grew aggressive. Their great leader, Saladin, captured stronghold after stronghold. At length Guy de Lusignan, king in right of his marriage with the Angevin princess Sibylla, met Saladin in battle on the hills above Galilee. Tormented by a foe whom they could not strike, maddened by smoke from the brushwood which Saladin had fired, parched with thirst in sight of water they could not reach, most of the Crusaders of the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem fought that day their last field. The Holy City surrendered soon after. Guy himself remained a captive in Saladin's hands. For the Angevins, as for another royal house, the crown that had come with a lass had gone with a lass. Saladin.  
Battle of Tiberias.  
Fall of the kingdom of Jerusalem.

The fall of Jerusalem had shocked all Christendom. Straightway there was a call for another Crusade. England echoed to it, as did other countries. But to Henry II the disaster came home with special force; it was the overthrow of his Angevin kinsmen. Accordingly Henry himself had meant to take a vigorous part in the new Crusade. Death, however, cut short his plans, but he left the task as a legacy to his son, Richard. Obedience to his father's wishes had not so far been Richard's strong point, yet to go on a Crusade was the very thing to which his warlike, adventurous spirit inclined him.



The third Crusade, in which Richard played the chief part, is the best known of all. The character of Richard himself sheds a lustre over it. Medieval and modern story-tellers have been attracted by his reckless valour, his personal strength, his amazing exploits in war. Nor was Richard alone: his antagonist, Saladin, is renowned for his martial skill and courtesy, which drew from the Crusaders a respect which they seldom gave to any infidel. Further, the third Crusade was pre-eminent for the number of crowned heads who joined in it. The Emperor Frederick Barbarossa led a host across Asia Minor, losing his life in the enterprise. Philip Augustus, the King of France, accompanied Richard. Leopold, Duke of Austria, led his forces to the Holy Land also. In every respect, both in persons and in numbers of the combatants, the Crusade was on the grand scale.

Unluckily the motives of the leaders in no way corresponded to the magnificence of the enterprise. Richard, though an admirable fighter, and no bad tactician either, had that imperious spirit which made him even more dangerous to his friends than to his foes. On his way to the Holy Land he engaged in one quarrel in Sicily, and another in Cyprus, where he dethroned the king. As soon as he arrived he pressed on the siege of Acre, which had lasted two years, to a victorious end, but then plunged headlong into quarrels. To decide who should be king of Jerusalem before Jerusalem was taken, was perhaps premature, and certainly difficult. The Angevin Queen Sibylla had died without children. Philip favoured one of his friends; Richard hotly pressed the claims of Sibylla's husband, Guy de Lusignan. Incessant bickering went on between French and English, till Philip withdrew his men and went back to France to plot at home with John against Richard. Then Richard led the Crusaders southwards winning a great battle against the Saracens at Arsouf, by means of the patient steadiness of his crossbowmen and an impetuous charge by his knights. Twice he came within twelve miles of Jerusalem, but never was strong enough to form the siege; at last he made a treaty with Saladin, securing for Christian pilgrims rights to visit Jerusalem unhindered, and retaining Joppa. It was not much to achieve at the expense

The third  
Crusade,  
1189-1192.

Richard's  
Crusade.

Failure of  
Richard.



of blood and treasure; the capture of Acre alone was said to have cost 300,000 men.

Richard was now to reap the harvest of his quarrels. One enemy had already gone home: it was indeed the news of John's intrigues with the French king which decided Richard that if he wished to retain the Crown of England, he could no longer battle in Palestine.

Richard's captivity and release.

But he had made a deadly foe of another Crusader. He had found Leopold of Austria's banner set above his own. He had caused it to be flung down with ignominy. Leopold bided his time, and the chance for revenge came when, on his return home, Richard was shipwrecked on the coasts of the Adriatic, and, trying to cross Austria in disguise, fell a prisoner into Leopold's hands. How Leopold sold him to the Emperor Henry VI, who also owed him a grudge for his conduct in Sicily, and how Henry held him captive for four months till a ransom was paid and he was accepted as feudal overlord of England is too well known to need more words. The whole episode offers an instructive comment on the hopeless selfishness which underlay the third Crusade. The enterprise begun for the rescue of the Holy City ended with the selling of one Christian monarch by another.

With Richard's difficulties after his return we have now no concern. From Richard's day English crusading-zeal dwindled. It is true that in 1240 Henry III's brother led an expedition to Palestine, and got a favourable treaty from the Sultan, and Edward I while still prince, after his overthrow of Simon de Montfort, also took the Cross, distinguished himself by capturing Nazareth, and indeed nearly lost his life there by a stab from a poisoned dagger. But none of these expeditions were comparable in scale to Richard's. Never again did an English king leave his realm to go Crusading.

Decline of crusading spirit.

It remains to notice a few of the effects of the Crusades. They removed from England a number of the most turbulent and dangerous barons. Some of these never came home; those who did return had often sold much of their possessions in order to find the money to pay their expenses, and so found themselves weakened. Robert of Normandy pledged his dukedom to his brother, and lost it; Richard himself

Effects of the Crusades.



jocularly declared, "I would have sold London itself, if I could have found a rich enough buyer". He did sell all he could, including the rights to the payment of homage by Scottish kings. What Henry had won by the Treaty of Falaise, Richard suffered William the Lion to buy back again. In this time of general sale many made good bargains, and none better than townsmen.

**Towns buy freedom.**

Hitherto towns had been mostly under the control of some lord, either the king or a baron, on whose domain the town stood; they were ruled by his sheriff or bailiff; they were liable to pay his dues. Many of the towns took advantage of the Crusades to buy charters, which relieved them of this control. Henceforth they were free, having their government in their own hands, able to impose and collect their own dues, and make their own rules for the conduct of trade. In this way the Crusades gave a great stimulus to the development of our towns.

They encouraged trade also. The crusading armies opened new trade routes, or reopened old ones long blocked. Men grew familiar with the more refined civilization of the East, and on their return desired to have Eastern goods and Eastern luxuries in their Western homes. All this led to a new intercourse between East and West, which had results far more solid than the erratic exploits of the Crusaders. But this commercial prosperity affected England little. It centred round the Mediterranean ports, and England, in its northern isolation, lay in those days far from the world's highway.

The choice of Richard as a national hero-king is not a little curious. A hero of a sort he certainly was: he possessed the strength of limb, the skill with his weapons, the reckless courage, which were the chief glories of the knight errant, the ideal of that age. In addition, he was personally popular. He was fond of songs and jests, being himself a fair musician and gifted with a ready wit, as may be seen from his reply to the Pope, who claimed as "his son" a bishop who had been taken prisoner while fighting in a battle. Richard sent the Pope the bishop's coat of mail with the pointed inquiry, "Know now whether this be thy son's coat, or no". He was not haughty unless he was affronted, and though his temper was

**Character of Richard I.**



blazing hot, he forgave as readily as he flew into wrath, and these sudden pardons, these unlooked-for escapes from the lion's jaws, were so unexpected as to win him a character for clemency. He was open and simple, and the ruler who never puzzles his subjects is generally liked. But with all these qualities he was essentially not English; he had very little English blood in him; he took little interest in England, save that her men made good fighters. He only spent ten months in England out of the ten years which he reigned. When he came back from the Crusades he plunged into wars in France, and he met an appropriate death, being mortally wounded by an arrow from the Castle of Chaluz, which he was besieging in order to get from his vassal a treasure which had been discovered there. It is characteristic of him that he forgave on his deathbed Bertrand de Gourdon, the man who fired the shot, and equally characteristic of his time that one of his mercenary captains kept Bertrand in prison till Richard had passed away, and then flayed him alive. But though Richard's connection with England was so flimsy, he has won in romance the same national admiration which has centred in Scotland on a queen who was equally foreign. Richard of England and Mary Queen of Scots were by birth, upbringing, and tastes both French.

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### XIII. John and Magna Carta

The long period covered by the reigns of John and Henry III possesses one strongly marked character throughout. It was an age of bad government. John was oppressive, Henry <sup>John and</sup> was feeble: both alike were unsatisfactory. In each <sup>Henry III.</sup> case the barons interfered to set matters right. Thus in both reigns there was great progress made in the building up of our peculiar English Constitution in its most essential features: (1) the right of the whole nation to settle its own affairs by means of a Representative Assembly; and (2) the responsibility of the king's



ministers, not to the king, but to Parliament. Putting the matter more shortly, the thirteenth century is the age of the Making of

Parliament. And it is further remarkable that Parliament, itself the product of the weakness of two kings, is confirmed by the policy of a third king who was good and strong. Edward I might have used his strength to destroy the infant Parliament; on the contrary, he fostered it.

We have spoken of Parliament as the product of the badness and weakness of two kings, and throughout we shall notice that, as a general rule, the Constitution develops most **Opportunities of Parliament.** when the Crown is for any reason ineffective. A bad ruler provokes those efforts to restrain the absolute royal power which we call constitutional government. A weak ruler gives the opportunity for them. And as the power of Parliament grew at the expense of the royal authority, it is obvious that, as a rule, when one is vigorous the other will be languid, and vice versa. Exceptions will occur when a strong king encourages Parliament to be very courageous, or when both king and Parliament are united in one policy, or when both alike are weak because some other body in the state has the mastery over them. We have examples of the first phase in the reigns of Edward I and Henry V, for both kings encouraged Parliament; Henry VII and Henry VIII illustrate the second phase, for in their days King and Parliament agreed; the third phase may be observed in the reign of Henry VI, where neither King nor Parliament could control the barons. But ordinarily Parliament, in its early history, is only remarkable when it is striving to abridge the power of the Crown; and its opportunity comes when the Crown is either misusing its power, or has temporarily lost it.

From the accession of Richard to the accession of Edward I—a period of over eighty years—the Crown was, from one cause or another, less strong. Richard was much absent from England, and left his powers to men acting as regents; John was vicious, and provoked a general rebellion; Henry III was a boy only nine years old; and his reign began with a long minority, during which regents governed in his name. Even when he grew up he proved to be feeble and

**Weakness of Crown, 1189-1272.**



extravagant, and he trusted in favourites who misgoverned the realm so as to provoke a second rebellion much like that which John provoked. Thus these eighty years were unusually favourable to the growth of any body that could control and reform the royal power; and each of the rebellions—that of 1215, and that of 1264—marks a very important step in the growth of our Constitution.

From his birth John had been the curse of all who had to deal with him. The youngest of Henry II's sons, he was at first portionless: hence his name "Lackland", a title which <sup>John, 1189-1199.</sup> became more appropriate when his folly lost the English possessions in Normandy. His father, who gave him a love he did not in the least deserve, quarrelled with his other sons in the effort to find dominions to give him. He was sent to Ireland that he might conciliate the Irish tributary kings, but he only insulted them by his rude behaviour. He plotted with the King of France against his father, and by his treachery brought his grey hairs in sorrow to the grave. Richard knew what manner of brother he was leaving behind him. He tried to bind John by gratitude, bestowing nearly a third of the realm on him, and making him swear not to visit England for three <sup>His treachery to Richard I.</sup> years. John had as little respect for gratitude as he had for an oath. Richard had scarce been gone a year when John came back into England, quarrelled with the justiciar, Longchamp, and began to rule in his own possessions like a king. The news of his brother's captivity tempted him further. He acted as if Richard were dead and himself monarch: he did homage for Normandy to Philip, defying Richard's officers, and gathering a party round himself to support him even should Richard return. When Richard was at last ransomed he would have had justice on his side had he put John to death as a traitor; but he despised the slippery prince too much to fear him. John, by a show of submission, made his peace; he was clever enough to appreciate the value of the advice in which Philip Augustus told him that his brother was once more at liberty—"The devil is unchained: take care of yourself". Richard gave him back none of his estates, so that for the rest of the reign he was powerless.



With his brother's sudden death, however, came John's opportunity. He had very little difficulty in succeeding to all Richard's wide dominions. Normandy, Maine, and Anjou, all acknowledged him as king. His mother Eleanor secured Poitou and Guienne for him, while the chief barons in England, with the Archbishop and the Justiciar at their head, declared him to be rightful king in England. It is not surprising that the hereditary claims of his nephew Arthur of Brittany were set aside, for, untrustworthy as John had proved himself, he was a man, and Arthur was a boy unsuited to be a king. Moreover, Arthur's father, Geoffrey, had been the most unpopular of all Henry II's sons, and the choice of John as the elder male relation of the dead king was only following what had been done before. We owe our best as well as our worst king to the same principle. King Alfred succeeded by the same title as King John.

It is important to distinguish in John's reign the successive steps by which he managed to lose the support of all branches of his subjects: first, how he suffered his domains in France to be taken from him; secondly, how he affronted the Church; thirdly, how by oppressive government at home he irritated the barons and the people. Hitherto the people had generally supported the kings against baronial revolt, but John's misrule drew all Englishmen, gentle and simple alike, together in a general attack on him.

Having an enemy in France, Arthur of Brittany, it was clearly John's policy to keep friendly with Philip Augustus, King of France, lest that monarch should take up Arthur's cause. This would not have been easy in any case. Philip was sure to seek a pretext for war, but John made peace impossible. His weak point lay in Aquitaine, where his mother's influence alone had won over the great lords. John's headstrong temper soon lost what his mother had won. He divorced his wife Avise of Gloucester, and then carried off Isabella of Angoulême to be his wife in spite of the threats of the Church. As the Gloucester family was the most influential in the English baronage, and the affianced husband of Isabella was the Count of La Marche, John's greatest vassal in Aquitaine, John's act was a masterstroke of folly. At one blow he made deadly

Quarrel  
with the  
King of  
France.



enemies at home and abroad. Philip readily took up the complaint. He summoned John as his vassal. John refused to come. Thereupon Philip declared war, and joined with Arthur of Brittany in invading Normandy. La Marche and Arthur hurried to besiege the castle of Mirebeau, where John's mother, Eleanor, held out. Roused for once to vigour, John surprised the rebels and captured Arthur. He could not resist the temptation of murdering him, which was as unwise as it was cruel, for Arthur a prisoner would have been a most valuable hostage, whereas his murder only gave John's enemies a fresh weapon. Still, had John shown any energy, he might have saved Normandy, for Richard had built on the Seine a magnificent castle—Château Gaillard<sup>1</sup>—strong enough to delay and defy an invader till help might be gathered in England. For a year Château Gaillard held out, but John let it fall by starvation with scarce any effort to relieve it. And with it fell the English power in France. Normandy, Touraine, Maine, Anjou, and the north of Aquitaine all came into Philip's hands. Bordeaux and the south of Guienne still remained in English hands; but nothing else save the Channel Islands was left of the magnificent heritage which Henry II had handed down.

Murder of Arthur of Brittany.

Fall of Château Gaillard, 1204.

This was a disaster for John Lackland, but not perhaps for his English subjects. Hitherto England had been overburdened by the importance of the French dominions, as a tree by too many boughs. Boughs may be lopped, and the tree grow the stouter for the lopping. The loss of Normandy proved England's gain, in that it brought a unity which was new. Hitherto kings and barons alike had been half French, half English, with estates and interests on both sides of the Channel. Henceforward they were to be English only. And a king who neglected his duty at home could no longer take refuge in his French dominions till the storm had blown over.

Growth of English national unity.

The result of confining John's enterprises to England was the speedy concentration of the hatred of all classes upon him. In 1205 Hubert Walter, Archbishop of Canterbury, died. He had been appointed in 1193 by Richard, with whom he had been in the Holy Land and by

Quarrel with the Church, 1205.

<sup>1</sup>i.e. "Saucy Castle".



whom he had been made a commissioner for the collection of the ransom. Hubert was an official rather than a churchman; he had discharged the duties of justiciar and chancellor with some credit; he had acted as a check upon John. The right of electing a successor belonged to the monks of Canterbury, but under Henry I's agreement the election should take place in the king's court. However, at the time, the monks were having a dispute with the bishops of the province of Canterbury, who claimed a right to take part in the election, and, thinking to get quit of interference by both bishops and king, they met secretly, and chose Reginald their Sub-Prior, sending him off to Rome with a party of monks to get his election confirmed by the Pope. Reginald was too vain to hold his tongue; the secret reached the ears of the king, who, in high wrath, compelled the monks to make a second election of John de Grey, Bishop of Norwich, and sent off another embassy to Rome. The Pope, Innocent III, one of the most capable and masterful men who ever held the office, received both embassies and disapproved of both candidates. The Sub-Prior was a nobody; John de Grey was a friend of the king's, a better soldier than he was a bishop. One had been elected secretly, the other by dint of threats. Innocent always claimed the right of supervising the election of bishops—and he was not slow in acting. He annulled both elections, and persuaded the monks who were in the embassy to choose his own candidate. His action may have been high-handed; he certainly forced his candidate on the monks every whit as much as John Stephen Langton. had forced de Grey; but about the wisdom of his choice there could be only one opinion, for he chose a distinguished English Cardinal, Stephen Langton.

Then began a violent struggle. John refused to allow Langton to set foot in England. Innocent replied with an interdict which suspended services, closed the churches, and stopped the bells; marriages could not be celebrated inside the churches; even the dead went unblest to their graves in unconsecrated ground. All the bishops, save John de Grey of Norwich and Peter des Roches of Winchester, stood by the Pope, and the clergy followed. John turned on the clergy, driving some oversea and confiscating their revenues, and outlawing all.



Innocent retorted with an excommunication which touched the godless John but little. Indeed he was doing well; he was growing rich on Church funds, and with them taking soldiers into his pay in order to settle old scores with the Welsh and Scots. At last Innocent threatened to depose him, and even went so far as to invite the King of France to drive him off the throne.

This once more revealed the weakness of John's position: Had he been supreme over the Clergy, interdict and excommunication would have troubled him no more than they troubled Henry VIII. Had he felt secure of his people at home, he could have defied the Papal ally, Philip of France, as easily as Elizabeth defied another Papal ally, Philip of Spain. But he was not secure; on the contrary, he had many enemies; he knew it well enough, for he had made them for himself by his grasping taxation and his vicious life. Innocent's threat cowed him, and he gave way. Submission was not made easy for him. He had to swear fealty to the Pope, to pay a yearly tribute of 1,000 marks, and to accept England as a papal fief. These terms, seemingly degrading to modern minds but probably not considered very disgraceful at the time, were accepted by John, and may even in part have been suggested by him. That there were other kingdoms, such as Sicily and Aragon, whose kings were held in similar vassalage to the Pope without suffering much inconvenience, is no excuse for John. His baseness lies in his utter unscrupulousness; to save himself he sold his kingdom; he opened still wider the door which let in Papal taxation and interference.

Meantime, having made his peace with the Pope, he might have expected to be free from Philip. Indeed the Pope ordered Philip to desist from his enterprise. But it was easier to stir hatred than to allay it. John wished to follow up a successful raid on the French fleet at Damme by an invasion of France, but his barons would not follow him. Foiled here, he prepared a great league against Philip. He enlisted the Emperor Otto and the Count of Flanders. He himself went to stir up Poitou, leaving an English force under the Earl of Salisbury to aid the allies. The plan was well laid.

(c 271)

8-9\*

Alliance  
against  
France;  
battle of  
Bouvines.



raid was to draw Philip into the west, and leave Paris open on the north-east to a blow from the German allies; but, as in all such complex schemes, accurate co-operation was necessary to success. John was for once in a way too punctual—so prompt that Philip was able to dispose of him and return to the eastern part of his kingdom while the emperor dawdled over the marriage festivities of his daughter. At length the armies stumbled on each other at Bouvines (1214), and a hard-fought action, in which the French levies on foot did their part bravely side by side with the horsemen, ended in the complete overthrow of the allies. Salisbury and the Count of Flanders remained prisoners in Philip's hands, and John was driven to retire to England, his last hopes of recovering a Continental power, and so getting relief from his English troubles, at an end.

For indeed troubles had gathered fast. The party of the barons had closed its ranks; it had been joined by the townsmen; it had found a policy and a leader. The policy was to compel the king to acknowledge formally the rights of his subjects and to amend their grievances. The leader was Stephen Langton, and the steps in which he guided his party are memorable. In 1213 there met at St. Albans an assembly, including not only barons, but also the reeves and four villeins from each royal manor, in which the grievances of the realm were discussed. A few weeks later Langton read to the barons at St. Paul's the Charter of Liberties granted by Henry I, and it was agreed that a similar charter should be imposed on John. When John returned to England after the battle of Bouvines, he did his best to strengthen himself against the barons. He imported mercenaries, implored the help of the Pope, and even took the Crusader's vow in order that anyone attacking him might come under the ban of the Church. But the barons were too strong for him; even his own friends deserted him; and at Runnimeade, on June 15, 1215, he reluctantly sealed the Great Charter.

Magna Carta,  
1215.

Of the sixty-three clauses, four have been of lasting importance in the story of our Constitution. These are the twelfth, which provides that no scutage or aid, saving only the three regular feudal aids,<sup>1</sup> shall be imposed, save

The Constitutional clauses.

<sup>1</sup> To knight the king's son, to marry his daughter, or to ransom his person.



by the "common council of the realm"<sup>1</sup>; and the fourteenth which lays down that this "council" is to consist of an assembly to which archbishops, bishops, earls, and greater barons were to be summoned, each by a separate writ, and other tenants-in-chief by a writ directed to the sheriff of the county. These clauses, which, to begin with, only restricted the king from imposing one kind of tax upon one class of persons—namely, tenants-in-chief—have been used as the foundation of the great principle that the king cannot levy any tax without the consent of Parliament. Further, the thirty-ninth and fortieth clauses, which run: "No free man shall be taken or imprisoned, or dispossessed, or outlawed, or exiled, or in any way destroyed; nor will we go upon him, nor will we send upon him, unless by the lawful judgment of his peers, or by the law of the land", and "To none will we sell, to none will we deny or delay, right or justice", have been enlarged and widened to provide for the liberty of the subject, the right of trial by jury, equality of all before the law, and the supremacy of the law over kings, lords, and commons alike. Over and over again these clauses have been invoked against the Crown. This was especially the case in the struggle between king and Parliament in the 17th century. For when the Five Knights were imprisoned by King Charles for refusing to contribute to a forced loan, and again, when John Hampden would not pay ship money, it was to the Great Charter that they appealed.

Yet though these clauses, which later ages interpreted as laying down wide principles restraining the powers of all kings, have emerged in the course of time as being the most valuable provisions in the Charter, and the rest have sunk into obscurity as the circumstances which called for them passed away, it must not be forgotten that what we are now apt to leave on one side was in its day the most important. In the main the Great Charter was a bond between a feudal king and feudal barons; it runs on feudal lines. The four great clauses are, we have seen, mainly feudal. Fourteen clauses lay down feudal obligations about wardships, marriages, escheats, and services; nine restrain the Crown from exacting money by the abuse of privi-

Feudal  
clauses.

<sup>1</sup> In the reissue of the Charter in 1217 it was provided that scutage should be levied as it was under Henry II.



leges, such as the right of purveyance; or by the increasing of established duties; fourteen are concerned with the better regulation of the king's courts; add to these the thirteen clauses which applied only to the need of binding John for the time, and we have three-quarters of the whole. But the remainder includes stipulations that the Church should be free and have all its rights, that London and other towns should enjoy their privileges, that merchants should come and go freely into the kingdom, and the villein should not be deprived by fines of the implements by which he made his living. Though Magna Carta, being drawn up mainly by the barons, naturally bears most on what concerned them, it must not be described as entirely a class measure, for it was carefully laid down that rights which the feudal tenants-in-chief won from the king were also to hold good for the intermediate tenant against his superior.

Thus in the main there was little in the Charter intended to be new, since it aimed at restoring customs which John had broken. In reality it became one of the great starting-points of our national liberties.

The Charter was sealed; the next thing was to get it observed. John gave his promise, because at the time there was nothing else for him to do; he gave it the more readily, because from the first he had not the slightest intention of keeping it. When he learnt of the twenty-five barons who were to enforce it on him, he cried out furiously, "They have given me twenty-five over-kings". He cast about for means to break loose. He gathered a party of barons, hired more mercenaries, and made ready for war. The Pope, as overlord of England, annulled the Charter and forbade its observance, under penalty of excommunication. The king's enemies turned for help to France. They even offered the crown to Louis, son of Philip Augustus. Louis landed with a French force. For nearly a year civil war raged up and down England, till John fell suddenly ill and died at Newark. His opportune death was the only good gift he ever bestowed on his country. Even his abilities were always turned to evil ends. No man was a greater master in the art of misusing his talents.

The struggle  
over the  
Charter.

Death of  
John, 1216.



## XIV. The Charter and its Guardian, Parliament

### 1. Henry III, 1216-1272

The period from 1215 to 1297 is sometimes spoken of as the eighty years' struggle over the Charter. In the former year John sealed it; in the latter year Edward I solemnly confirmed and enlarged it in the *Confirmation of the Charters*. But in the same eighty years grew up a guardian of the Charter who watched over it far more jealously than the committee of "twenty-five over-kings" against whom John had railed. This was Parliament, and more particularly the representatives of the "king's faithful Commons", who have built up their power, starting from the foundation laid in the Charter, that the king could not obtain money save by the common council of the realm. Before granting a supply, Parliament would demand the redress of some grievance, or the fulfilment of some promise, and first it always turned to the due observance of the Great Charter. No less than thirty-seven times have our kings been called on solemnly to confirm it.

1215-1297.  
Magna Carta.  
Confirmation  
of the Charters.

In following the reign of Henry III we must look for signs of the growth of Parliament. And we must recognize what it is that we seek. It is not merely the existence of an assembly which governed or took a share in the Government; such an assembly already existed in the "Council" mentioned in the twelfth article of Magna Carta, and of course it was far older. All English kings, even back into remote Saxon days, had a council whose advice they asked, if they did not always take it. The Saxon Witan in theory gave its consent to the king's laws and taxes, approved the appointment of his ministers, even on occasion could elect or depose a king. When the Normans succeeded, the substance of the Witan's powers came to the king's Court or Council—the Curia Regis—that body of many shapes and many functions, whose nature has been already explained. But both the Witan,

Parliament a  
representative  
governing body.



where the qualification was nominally wisdom, and the Curia Regis, whose members held land direct from the king, differed essentially from Parliament. They were to a certain extent governing assemblies, and so is Parliament. But Parliament is more; it is a *representative* governing assembly. Both Witan and Curia Regis were class bodies; Parliament is a national body.

What is to be sought, then, is the alloy of representatives with the governing assembly. This will fuse the Curia Regis into a Parliament. To anticipate for a moment the course of the story, we may remark that the year 1295 saw gathered the "Model" Parliament, more completely representative of England even than the Parliament of to-day.<sup>1</sup> We remember also that the "Eighty years' struggle over the Charter" ended in 1297: to be precise, it covered eighty-two years. If we go back from the Model Parliament of 1295, we alight on the assembly at St. Albans in 1213, which is the first example of representatives called to consult with the Curia Regis. True, that they only advised: they were admitted by courtesy, not by right. None the less it was one of those first steps which count much. It is not a little curious that precisely the same period of eighty-two years separates both these pairs of events.

Put generally, the chief thing in the history of England during the thirteenth century is the safeguarding and enlarging of the Great Charter under the hands of an assembly which itself developed into a new shape, under a new name, that of Parliament. More particularly this may be illustrated from the words of the Charter itself. The 12th clause says, "*Nullum scutagium vel auxilium ponatur in regno nostro nisi per commune consilium regni nostri.* . . ."<sup>2</sup> "No scutage or aid shall be placed on the realm, save by the common consent of the realm." The progress was in two ways. First, to extend the words "*Nullum scutagium vel auxilium*" into the much wider general principle "no tax of any sort"; secondly, to arrive at a methodical and satisfactory way of obtaining this "*commune consilium regni*", namely, in Parliament. It should not be supposed that these wide ideas occurred to the minds of the barons who were fighting for their Charter

<sup>1</sup> Because the lower clergy sent representatives.

<sup>2</sup> Except the three regular feudal aids. See page 106.



against King John. On the contrary, no sooner was John dead than the party who took the side of his son Henry III under the leadership of William Marshall, Earl of Pembroke, and Hubert de Burgh, reissued the Charter, but carefully left out what is nowadays held to be the gist of it, namely, these 12th and 14th clauses, the very two on which the future power of Parliament against the Crown was to be founded. It is clear that in 1216 they were not felt to be necessary; perhaps not even popular. They would hamper a regency as much as a king.

Rule of National party. Reissue of Charter (without clauses 12 and 14).

John's death left the kingdom torn with civil war. The barons had invited Louis and his Frenchmen into the realm to help them against their tyrant; now that the tyrant was dead, they wished to be rid of the French. Louis, however, would not withdraw. He claimed the Crown for himself. The barons, however, soon deserted him, and drew together in the cause of the young Henry. The French were defeated by Pembroke in a desperate fight in the streets of Lincoln; while in the battle of Dover Hubert de Burgh destroyed a French fleet bringing reinforcements under Eustace the Monk. These two blows made Louis give up hope. In a few weeks peace was signed, and the French left the country.

Defeat of the French at Lincoln.

The fair of Lincoln.

Henry III succeeded to the throne at the age of nine, and was therefore at first too young to influence the Government. The first period of his reign lasts till 1232, and reflects the ideas of his ministers; in the second, the king's own weak, untrustworthy character and his foolish and extravagant policy gave an opening to a set of worthless favourites, relations, and hangers-on at court; the third, beginning about 1253, is a period of turmoil caused by the efforts of the barons to obtain better government, chiefly under the leadership of Simon de Montfort. Of these, the first two may be dismissed somewhat shortly. The third calls for more notice.

1. The Earl of Pembroke died in 1219, and the business of being regent in fact, though not in name, passed to Hubert de Burgh. Hubert governed well: his chief task was to crush the few remaining adherents of John's party. Falkes de Bréauté



may fairly stand as a type of them, a refugee from Normandy whom John had used to captain his mercenaries, and had re-warded with estates, castles, and sheriffdoms. His chief stronghold was Bedford Castle, where his brother had the impudence to seize and imprison one of the king's justices. Hubert attacked the castle, forced the first two lines of walls, and undermined the keep, so that part of the wall fell. Eighty of the defenders were hanged, and Falkes himself was driven into exile. Such sharp justice terrified smaller offenders into submission.

Unfortunately, when Henry came of age, in 1227, he showed no gratitude to de Burgh. The death of the great Archbishop Stephen Langton, in 1228, robbed the Justiciar of a good friend; and in 1232 Henry dismissed him, and forfeited his estates. Hubert was the last great Justiciar.

2. There followed a long period of bad government. The king was poor, since Richard had sold, and John had given away, many royal estates, and it was no longer easy to raise money by scutages and aids; but though poor he was far from sparing. His chief minister, Peter des Roches, a Poitevin, pushed his relations and foreign friends into every office and sheriffdom that fell vacant; when Peter fell into disgrace there came a fresh incursion of foreigners with Henry's wife, Eleanor of Provence. One uncle became an archbishop, a second a bishop, a third an earl. They naturally gave all they could to their own countrymen. Provençals proved every whit as greedy as Poitevins, and the whole country grew exasperated at Henry and the foreigners who filled the court. Then Henry engaged in an inglorious war with France, and

**The Battle of  
Taillebourg,  
1242.**

lost the battle of Taillebourg or Saintes, in which he narrowly escaped capture. Undeterred by this failure he meddled in the quarrel between the Papacy and the descendants of Frederick II. He weakly accepted the offer of the throne of Naples and Sicily for his younger son, Edmund, and as a result had cast on him the task of paying for the war which the Pope was waging. Edmund never got the throne, and a more purposeless waste of money could hardly be imagined.



Irritated by the foreigners, provoked by the incompetent and extravagant king, the barons demanded that proper officials should be chosen and the charters kept. Henry gave plenty of promises, but never kept them. So, till a leader could be found on the baronial side, nothing could be done. With the appearance of Simon de Montfort, however, we pass to the third and important period of the reign.

3. Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, was the son of the de Montfort who had led the Crusade against the Albigenses in the south of France. He had married Henry's sister, Eleanor, but was disliked at Court, and had spent most of his life abroad.

Simon de Montfort: reform and rebellion.

His chief work had been as Seneschal of Gascony to try to keep the Gascon nobles in order. He set about this resolutely, and so unpopular did his firmness make him, that the Gascons complained. Henry would not support him, and Simon resigned. In 1257 he came to England. Nine years were destined to see him rise to a position above the king, then even more suddenly fall in complete ruin; and yet leave a name that ranks among the greatest in English constitutional history.

Being himself a foreigner, and related by marriage to Henry III, it seems at first sight strange that he should come to lead the national baronial party against the Court and the foreigners. But the fact is, that, though he was brother-in-law to the king, the king and his family looked down on him; and it was hatred to the queen's Provençal relations that drove him into the national ranks. His own nature, serious, masterful, and pious, soon secured him the foremost place.

In 1258 Henry, more pressed for money than ever, had to meet his barons. The assembly, known as the Mad Parliament, since all the barons came to it fully armed, drove out the foreigners, and appointed a council of

The Mad Parliament, 1258.

twenty-four to carry out reforms. Adjourning to Oxford, it drew up a new scheme of government known as the "Mise of Oxford". The main point was the establishment of a permanent council of fifteen to supervise the government, check illegal exactions, restore justice, and recover the royal castles: they were, in case of need, to confer with another council of twelve, chosen by the



barons. The leaders in the fifteen were Simon de Montfort, and Richard de Clare, Earl of Gloucester.

These leaders, however, did not agree; for a time the quarrel was smothered by the death of Gloucester, but in the meantime the faithless Henry had once more given the slip to his promises. Following the precedent of his father he persuaded the Pope to absolve him of his oath, and got the question of whether he was bound by the Provisions of Oxford referred to Louis IX. Louis was probably the most virtuous king who ever sat on a throne, but he was certain to look on things from a king's point of view. By the Mise of Amiens he decided that Henry might do as he liked, provided he violated "no royal charter or praiseworthy custom". Henry had shown in the past that he cared not a jot for either.

The Mise  
of Amiens,  
1264.

Nothing was left but to try force. Simon gathered the barons to his standard, and was backed by the south. Henry's chief supporters came from the marches and the north. The division indeed was not unlike that in another King Henry's case; here Simon de Montfort plays the part which the Yorkist leader afterwards played, and the king's friends the part of the Lancastrians. The armies met at Lewes, Simon attacking the town. The Londoners in his army were scattered by Henry's most capable leader, his son Edward. But Edward, then only twenty-four, had not yet become the cool, wary commander who was in future years to attack Scotland. Angered by the fact that these citizens of London had insulted his mother, he pursued his enemies furiously, without thinking of the rest of the battle. While he was away, Simon in the centre overthrew the Royal forces and captured the king. Henry had to submit, to accept once more the Provisions of Oxford, and to hand over Edward as a hostage.

Battle of  
Lewes,  
1264.

So far there had been nothing to mark off Simon from the rest of the large class of nobles who from time to time had taken arms against their sovereign. He had employed the ordinary baronial remedy for misgovernment, namely rebellion. It was the familiar nostrum—the only one known to the radical politician of the time. Though Simon bore a higher character, had a better cause, and had met with greater success than was



usual, these are only differences of degree, and not of kind. In essence he was a rebel, and the case is not altered by the fact that he was an abnormally virtuous one. His next step, however, was to lift him far above any other well-meaning rebellious baron, and mark in him that combination of theory with practice, that union of wisdom and opportunity, that belongs only to the statesman.

The truth was that his supporters among the barons were in reality but few. For a time the young Earl of Gloucester had stood by him, but he was growing lukewarm. Many other barons were inclined to favour the king again now that he had accepted the Provisions. Simon's real strength lay in the middle classes, especially in the towns. The Church, too, favoured him. Hence he sought a device whereby he could make this popular support tell, and so was the Founder of what became the House of Commons.

Simon de Montfort's new policy.

Both in Saxon and Norman institutions the common custom of using *representatives* has been already remarked. Representatives of hundreds and boroughs sat in the Shire courts; representatives from the townships gave evidence before the Domesday commissioners; and, older than these, the Councils of the Church had been attended by representatives from each diocese. In summoning representatives to his House of Commons, Simon was following a precedent already familiar to the nation and to the Church. Moreover, as has been seen, knights of the shire had attended Langton's Council at St. Albans in 1213; and in 1254, 1261, and 1264, knights had been chosen by each county to consider in the Great Council what aid they were willing to pay. But Simon went further. To his Parliament of 1265 he summoned not only two knights from each shire, but two citizens and two burgesses to represent certain cities and boroughs.

Representatives.

The Parliament of 1265.

The importance of this step is not diminished by the fact that it was plainly a partisan measure. Simon was popular in the towns; accordingly he invited representatives from the towns, well knowing that they would support him. It is true that while he enlarged the popular part of his Parliament, he restricted



the upper part. Of the fifty greater barons, only his friends, some twenty-three in all, were summoned. Nor indeed did the Parliament do anything of note. Its greatness rests not on what it did, but on what it was. It gave a starting-point from

Origin of the  
House of  
Commons.

which has grown our House of Commons. So long as those who attended the Council, or Parliament—call it by what name we may—were all either barons or knights of the shire, there was only one class represented—the class of landholders. The citizens and burgesses, however, represented the traders. And although in Simon's day, and for long after, landholders and traders sat together, yet the knights of the shire speedily grew accustomed to act with the men from the towns, thus forming a party of the "Commons" as distinct from the greater barons, the "Lords". This union of smaller landowners with the citizens and burgesses, the junction in one party of representatives from towns and counties, is a distinguishing mark of our Parliament. France, Spain, and the Empire also, at one time or another, had Estates or Diets to which representatives of different classes came, but each acted by itself, for itself; each "Estate" dealt with its own affairs only. And whereas these institutions all decayed, our Parliament grew stronger and stronger. Its most vigorous part is the House of Commons, and much of its vitality is due to the fact that it has always been a national body and not divided into "Estates". The beginning of this was Simon de Montfort's work.

Yet after all it was the work of a rebel, and no time was spared him to foster it. The quarrels between him and the young Gloucester grew keener. Prince Edward contrived to escape, and set himself to overthrow Simon. He made friends with Gloucester, and promised that he would expel the foreigners and rule according to law; and Edward, unlike his father, was known to keep his promises. Thus deprived of allies, Simon had only his sons and vassals to support him. While he was struggling to raise men in Wales, Edward, with a much larger force, got between him and his castle of Kenilworth, where his second son was gathering troops. Simon tried to slip back to join his son, but Edward surprised and cut to pieces the younger

Fall of Simon.  
Battles of  
Kenilworth and  
Evesham.



de Montfort's army at Kenilworth, and then, turning on Earl Simon, hemmed him in at Evesham; on three sides lay the river Avon; the only bridge was guarded; on the north, Edward's men swarmed in to the attack. Simon saw that he was lost. "God have mercy on our souls," cried he, "for our bodies are the prince's." He died fighting bravely against overwhelming odds.

Since Simon's cause rested on himself alone we might suppose that with his death his work too would perish: that the idea of a Parliament, extended so as to embrace town as well as county, would be looked on as the dangerous device of a rebel, and accordingly be left alone for the future. It is true that his party was destroyed; in the course of the next two years his sons were overcome, and the royal cause became again supreme. But it was Edward who had won and not Henry; Simon had at least secured this, that there was no return to the thriftless, faithless, purposeless rule of Henry III's earlier years. Simon de Montfort died a rebel with arms in his hand. Yet none the less he was a patriot and a remarkable statesman—remarkable not merely in the character of his work, but in the high-minded nature that enabled him to identify himself with a great cause. Like Stephen Langton he raised a baronial party from partisanship to patriotism. Just as Stephen Langton, originally forced on John by the power of the Pope, turned at the call of duty against the Papacy when the Papacy lent its support to the worthless King John, so Simon, himself a foreigner and a kinsman of the king, took arms against the king and his foreign favourites for the sake of good government. He is one example out of the many which history offers of an alien to whom England owes much. This half-Frenchman who founded our House of Commons may be well classed with the Dutchman who afterwards saved the liberties of Parliament, and with the Jew who showed Great Britain the meaning of Imperialism.

*character of Simon*



## 2. Edward I and the Law

For years before his accession to the throne Edward had given proof of vigour and unusual ability. As a young man he had been employed in ruling the most turbulent parts of his father's realm, Gascony and the Marches of Wales. The skill with which he had crushed Simon de Montfort has been already noted. Yet, though masterful by nature, he showed no wish to become a despot. On the contrary, he aimed at governing strictly by law, and making others obey what he respected himself. Thus he came to complete what Simon de Montfort had begun, namely, the establishment of the power of Parliament.

Edward's  
respect for  
law.

This is not a little curious. It might be supposed that the man who had been Simon's most capable foe, who had beaten his armies and brought about his death, would have been the last person to carry on as king the work Simon had begun as a rebel. We might think that in Edward's eyes the representing of the Commons would be hateful—a factious plan intended to harass the king. It was not so. Edward's legal turn of mind naturally brought him to develop Parliament till it should be truly representative of all classes.

Almost at once he repeated Simon's plan. To his Parliament of 1275 he summoned burghers and citizens from the towns, as well as knights of the shire; but this practice did not at once become the rule. Later again the knights alone were summoned, and sometimes no representatives at all of the "Commons" were sent for, Parliament then returning to its original shape the "Great Council" of magnates. At times again the king got grants direct from representatives of the merchants, without calling the others. Still, the principle that the assent of all was needed both to statutes and to grants of money was gradually becoming more settled.

Parliamentary  
experiments,  
1272-95.

But in the middle of these Parliamentary experiments Edward suddenly found himself involved in serious difficulties abroad. A later chapter gives the story of his dealings with the Scots and



the Welsh. All that need be said here is that in the year 1295 Scotland was in revolt; France, irritated by a fierce fight between English and Norman shipmen, in which the Normans were worsted, had joined alliance with the Scots and was invading Gascony; three revolts had broken out in Wales. Edward needed money to deal with three separate wars at once; that alone would have compelled him to summon a Parliament. But he seems to have felt that in a time of such danger to the nation he must take the nation into his confidence in a peculiarly thorough fashion. So he gathered his famous Parliament of 1295, summoning to it the earls and greater barons, the archbishops, bishops, and mitred abbots, two knights from each shire, two citizens and burgesses from each city and borough. As this Parliament was summoned by a king it has deserved its name of the "Model Parliament", for it has served as a model for all subsequent Parliaments. Indeed, in one sense, no other Parliament has ever so completely represented all classes, for Edward also caused the priors of the cathedrals, the archdeacons, and representatives of the clergy of each cathedral and each diocese to be summoned also. Thus the "three estates" of the realm, clergy, nobility, and commons, all figured in it fully represented. It was only because the churchmen preferred to remain a class apart, and to make their own grants of money in their own assembly ("convocation"), that their representatives had no place in the Parliament in the following century.

Model Parlia-  
ment, 1295.

The clergy.

The "Model Parliament" did not disappoint Edward's hopes. Clergy, barons, and commons alike voted him money. Yet just as with Simon's assembly, the Model Parliament of 1295 was important rather for what it was than for what it did. By its existence it established a precedent. "Parliament" could no longer be a class body, representative merely of the great barons and bishops, or of the landowners; henceforth it was national. Only thirty years had passed, and the device of a rebel baron had been accepted as the deliberate policy of a king.

Edward's troubles did not end, however, with the holding of the Model Parliament. Money had been voted, but it took time to collect it, and Edward, at war with Scots, Welsh, and



Frenchmen, was in a desperate hurry for supplies. To make things worse, Pope Boniface VIII, who wished to force Edward and Philip IV, King of France, to make peace, determined to cut off the supplies of money which they drew from Clericis Laicos.

the clergy in their realms. He therefore issued a bull known as "Clericis Laicos", forbidding all payments "from the clergy to the laity" without his sanction. As a matter of fact both kings treated the bull as a vexatious piece of papal interference. Edward I let it be understood that if the clergy refused to pay the grant they had promised, he would treat them as outlaws; that is to say, the law of England would give them no rights against anyone who defrauded or wronged them. Still, the result was to leave Edward in even greater straits for money, and, what was worse, his barons refused to go to the war in France. They were bound, they admitted, to accompany him; but they understood their obligation to "accompany" in the narrowest sense:

Refusal of Bigod  
and Bohun to  
serve abroad.

declared they would not go to Gascony while he went to Flanders. The Constable Bigod, Earl of Norfolk, and the Marshal Bohun, Earl of Hereford, were the ringleaders. "By God, Sir Earl," said Edward to the Constable in a ferocious pun, "thou shalt go or hang." "By God, Sir King," was the cool reply, "I will neither go nor hang." The two earls went home and fifteen hundred knights with them, and Edward, now at his wits' end for money and men, seized the wool from the merchants in the ports, ordered the courtiers to find him provisions, and soon after sailed for Flanders.

No sooner was he out of the kingdom than the two earls appeared in London, and forbade the King's Council to collect any of the moneys irregularly levied on wool. A Parliament was hastily summoned, and the earls demanded that the Great Charter

Confirmatio  
Cartarum,  
1297.

should be solemnly confirmed, with the addition of a clause that the king was not to take "such manner of aids or prises save by the common assent of the realm"; that the "evil tax" (the maltôte) on wool was to be given up; and that for the future the king and his heirs would not take anything without the common consent and goodwill of the *commonalty of the realm*, save only the ancient "custom"



on wool, skin, and leather already granted. The Council of Regency gave their promise to this, and the king afterwards confirmed their promise.

Thus the years 1295 and 1297 saw the fulfilment of what had been first shadowed out eighty-two years before; the year 1213 saw the first appearance of representatives of the Commons at a great Council; 1295 saw the principle established as a model. Magna Carta was sealed in 1215: its most important principles were reasserted and agreed to in the most solemn way in the Confirmation of the Charters of 1297. Eighty years had the struggle over the Charter lasted: it had ended in the victory of the nation over the king, and in the creation of a body whose chief duty was to watch over the Charter, namely Parliament. Yet it is noteworthy that the victory was won, as it was in 1215, by a rebellious gathering of barons. Parliament had not yet the vigour to stand for itself. In extremity the old remedy against misgovernment, an armed rising, was once more used. But while the first monarch, John, only gave promises as a convenient way out of a temporary difficulty, Edward's word could be trusted. His motto was "Keep troth", and he took pride in maintaining it. Then again the Confirmation of the Charters went much further than Magna Carta. That had only forbidden the levy of illegal scutages or aids, and in word at any rate Edward had not broken it. Taxing wool was not taking either scutage or aid. Edward was within the letter of the law. But the barons went by the spirit of it. They read the Charter as laying down the restriction of all taxation (save the three regular feudal aids) unless by the consent of the realm, and Edward, by yielding, admitted that they were right in their view.

Step forward  
from Magna  
Carta.

The end of the thirteenth century, then, saw the making of Parliament, the germ of a *representative governing assembly*. Yet it is going too far to think of Plantagenet parliaments as exactly like the busy, inquisitive, masterful body of to-day. In the first place, Lords and Commons still sat together; the severance between the two houses did not come till Edward II's day. Secondly, Parliament had no regular time for being summoned; that depended on the king. Thirdly, it had only a very indirect control over the king and his ministers;

Limitations of  
Parliament.



the only way it could make its power felt was by withholding supplies.<sup>1</sup> It could not make laws; what it did was to petition the king, and if he gave assent to its petitions with the words, *Le Roi le veut*, they became statutes; if, however, the king replied, *Le Roi s'avisera*,<sup>2</sup> the petition might be altered or dropped. It could not make ministers, though by degrees it found a cumbersome way of getting rid of exceptionally bad ministers by *impeaching*<sup>3</sup> them. It was not much consulted about affairs of state. Speaking generally, it had little force of its own. If the king smiled on it, it grew strong and even pugnacious; if the royal favour was turned away, it dwindled. Thus Parliament had little character of its own; it merely reflected the character of its patron for the time being. Members of the Commons did not covet membership, or come back year after year, as they do now, with the experience of many sessions. On the contrary, the task of being a member was rather looked on as a disagreeable and expensive duty, to be discharged once, and if possible eluded for the future. An assembly made up in the main of new and inexperienced men would naturally be timid. In a word, Parliament under the Plantagenets, and for

<sup>1</sup> Even so, much of the royal revenue was still beyond its control. Royal revenue at this time, and for long years after, may be broadly divided into two kinds, ordinary and exceptional. The ordinary supply came mainly from the royal demesne—the estates, that is to say, that the king owned, like a feudal lord. The profits of these, coupled with the fines imposed for breaches of the law; the payments made by towns on the royal demesne, and the money paid by merchants trading into and out of the kingdom, sufficed for the normal expenditure of the king. Extra or unusual expenses, such as were demanded by war, were met by "taxation", properly so called. This was not at first annual, but exceptional. It did not always fall on the same class; it might take the shape of a grant of a tenth or a fifteenth on the lands of the barons, or it might fall on the lands of the Church, or it might be a tallage on towns or a prisage imposed on the wine or wool of the merchants. By taking now one and now another, a rough equality was maintained. But Parliament wished the king to "live of his own" (on his own income) and so far from wanting to withhold supplies, did not even desire to have the power to do so. It was only as the king's private wealth dwindled and the importance of taxation increased that Parliament got a more complete hold over him.

<sup>2</sup> i.e. "The king will see about it."

<sup>3</sup> Properly so called an *Impeachment* is a trial in which the House of Commons is the accuser and the Lords are the judges. It differs from an *Act of Attainder* (the other parliamentary way of getting rid of an unpopular or guilty minister), for an Act of Attainder is not a trial at all, but (as its name denotes) a *Bill* of Parliament declaring that such and such a person is guilty of whatever it may be and is to be put to death. This becomes an *Act* by passing the two Houses in the usual way, and on receiving the Royal Assent becomes part of the law of the land—though only applying to the person or persons named in it. The word Attainder means that the "blood" (the family) was "attainted", and therefore the man's goods and property were forfeited to the king.



many years after, was rather a weapon which could be wielded than a power which would act by itself. None the less the root of the matter was in it. It did represent the nation; it did possess the power of the purse; and from this by degrees grew the rest.

An account of Edward I and Parliament is incomplete without some notice of his great legislative measures. In a sense he was the maker of English law as he was the maker of the English Parliament, since his is the earliest reign to which our law looks back. Statutes and decisions of his time are still "good law", unless they have since been set aside. And his reign was marked by great legislative and judicial activity. Apart from a mass of rules, dividing the work more definitely among the various justices in the various courts of King's Bench, Common Pleas, and Exchequer, the business of keeping the peace throughout the country was entrusted to a body of officers known as Conservators of the Peace. In the reign of Edward III these officers, with enlarged powers, had their name changed to the familiar term of Justices of the Peace, and have since then continued to discharge all kinds of local justice. Two points about these "J.P.'s" are worth special notice. They have never been paid, and they have no special legal training. This follows on the same idea which appears in the jury<sup>1</sup> system and in Parliament<sup>2</sup>, and in all our county and district councils, namely, that an English citizen has to do his duty to the state without any reward save that of honour; it has helped to keep the law closely in touch with everyday life; and it has saved us from the growth of a huge class of officials who, besides being very costly, are perhaps inclined to magnify their own importance at the expense of the good of the public. The history of the paid jurymen at Athens, and paid deputies and local functionaries in France and Germany, seems to show that, by paying, the state is sometimes worse served, since pay may attract a lower class of men, who may be tempted to take bribes, or use their place to do favours. Certainly, to serve for pay is a lower motive

Edward and English Law.

The Courts and Justices of the Peace.

<sup>1</sup> The ordinary jurymen is indeed paid, but the sum is so small that it cannot be described as a recompense for his loss of time.

<sup>2</sup> Members of Parliament have been paid since 1911.



than to serve for duty; yet it must be remembered that men of small means cannot afford to serve the state for nothing, and good service merits a reward.

Three great statutes of Edward I's deserve special mention—namely, the statute of *Mortmain*; the Second Westminster (*De Donis Conditionalibus*); and the Third Westminster (*Quia Emptores*). All three are concerned with land. To understand them we have to think once more of feudalism.

A feudal owner's power and wealth, whether he were king, tenant-in-chief, or mesne-tenant (see p. 60), depended largely on his sub-tenants. While they lived they paid certain *Mortmain.* services and dues; when they died their heirs paid fines, such as heriots and reliefs (see p. 83), before they succeeded to the estates of the dead. The overlord, then, was interested that during their lives they should be men of substance, able to discharge their duties punctually, and that their deaths should occur with normal frequency. At first sight one might be disposed to think that the last matter might be left to nature, that all tenants would die; but this is not so. There was a class of tenants who never died. If land were granted to a corporation, or to a corporation sole—that is to say, for example, to any monastery, or to “the abbot”, or “the vicar”, or “the mayor” of such and such a place—these never died: men came and went, but the institution or office lasted. Thus land granted to churchmen never changed tenant; it passed into the “dead hand”, into *Mortmain*, and the superior lost for ever all dues coming from its change of owner. “The Abbot of Glastonbury”, for example, never died, never was a minor, and never could be assigned in marriage. Land granted to him paid neither heriot, relief, wardship nor marriage dues. Further, as churchmen and monks were anxious to swell the estates of their order, and as a grant of land was the general way of securing those masses for the soul which were intended to help it in its passage through purgatory, deathbed grants of land to religious houses were common. Beyond this, however, there was a fraudulent practice of handing over land to a religious house and getting it regranted on easy terms. Edward I's statute of *Mortmain* forbade the buying, selling, or acquiring of land in any fashion



so that it could pass into *mortmain*; if any such bargain were made, the grant was void, and the land passed to the immediate superior.

The nobles were with the king in this matter, since they were always jealous of the churchmen, who had been the chief holders of land in *mortmain*. They also mostly approved the statute *Quia Emptores*. This was designed to check what was called *sub-infeudation*, that is to say, the practice of a feudal-tenant granting away to a sub-tenant part of the land granted to him. The reason why it was tempting to sub-infeud was that thereby the granter got more men under him and thus more power. An ambitious man would make a number of grants—often very petty ones—to his less pushing neighbours, in order that he might have a call on them in case of need; they would accept, since they would expect his protection in return. For two reasons the great landowners and the king (who was the greatest landowner of all) disliked this. To begin with, it involved all feudal ties in a tangle. It often happened that a man would hold land from three or four different people. He might be a tenant-in-chief from the king for one piece, and sub-infeuded to, say, the Earl of Gloucester for another piece, and to Sir Roger, who was himself a tenant of the Abbot of Tewkesbury, for a third. King, Earl, Knight, and Abbot would all have claims on him. Secondly, the tenant, in his anxiety to extend his feudal power over a large array of vassals, might grant away so much of his holding that he would be unable to perform his own due services to his overlord. Hence the statute *Quia Emptores* provided that, if a tenant granted land in this way, the receiver of it would hold, not from the granter, but from the granter's overlord.<sup>1</sup> This statute, like *Mortmain*, favoured the tenants-in-chief, but still more the king, as feudal superior of all land. By increasing the number of tenants-in-chief and diminishing the average size of their holdings, it decreased their social dignity and helped to destroy feudal power.

<sup>1</sup> A reference to the diagram on p. 126 (which represents things in a very simple way without taking account of the many complications caused by a man holding land from two or three different overlords, and being perhaps a "tenant-in-chief" for one holding and a "mesne tenant" for another) may make this rather tangled matter clearer. Suppose A grants land to *a*, who, being an ambitious fellow, sub-infeuds some to *x* and *z*. This is



One more measure, also of lasting importance in our history, was that known as *De Donis Conditionalibus*, which enabled land to be left to a man and his heirs in such a way that he was forbidden to part with it. This set up what is called "entail". As many estates were thus entailed, much land was secured in the possession of great houses. But it was secured to the heir, the eldest son; save where means of evading the statute were found, the younger sons of the house could get none. Thus, though a small number of landowners were kept great, there was no establishment of a landowning caste, who would regard themselves as noble, being inheritors of land, and despise all landless men as socially inferior; the younger sons of great families had to seek fortune in the world, either in arms, in the Church, or in the law. Thus, as these professions were constantly recruited from the younger sons of landed families, no severance grew up between the landed "noble" and the rest. It was not so in France, where all "nobles" remained "nobles", and the immense gap between them and the people was one of the great causes of the Revolution of 1789.

within *a*'s power before the passing of *Quia Emptores*. After the passing of the statute he desires to make a grant to 3; but if he does so, 3 will not be *a*'s tenant, but will hold

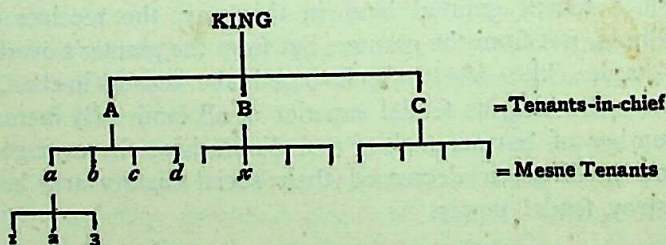


Diagram to illustrate the Statute *Quia Emptores*

from *a*'s overlord A. Similarly, if B makes a friendly grant to *x* (let us say, his son-in-law), *x* will now be a tenant-in-chief, holding direct from the king, and will become X.



## XV. An Early Great Britain and its Failure

### I. Wales

Edward I was a man of great political ideas; moreover, he had qualities and advantages which many political thinkers have not got. He was no mere dreamer, but a practical statesman. He not only thought, but he planned. He strove to put his ideas into practice in a logical and orderly way; and being a king, and a very powerful king too, he had the chance of trying his schemes. He could do what he liked; he was not, as statesmen often are nowadays, compelled to be content with half-measures, aiming only at the second best, because the best seems too difficult to attain.

We may sum Edward's policy as one of "orderly consolidation". Two aspects of it—his far-reaching legislative measures, and his shaping of the Model Parliament—have been explained. Another, which was of immense value to the kingdom, though it scarcely finds a place in political history, is seen in his commercial policy. At first each town had aimed at getting privileges for its own townsmen: those who were "free of the town" had all sorts of rights of buying and selling which the stranger from outside did not possess. In the regulations of the town guilds and merchant guilds, which were associations of townsmen in each town, we find hosts of regulations limiting and preventing the "foreigner" from competing or interfering with the townsman's profits; and it must not be supposed that "foreigner" included only those who were not English. The word was of far wider meaning. It meant anyone who was not a townsman. Consequently there was an abundant crop of jealousy between townsmen of different towns, and the whole trade of the country was hampered.

Policy of consolidation in law-making, Parliament, and commerce.

Restrictions in towns.

Although the average townsman was unable to see beyond his own town walls, Edward I was not likely to take so limited



a view. He did much to prevent the towns shutting themselves up in a cage of restrictions. He encouraged them where he thought the guild rules to be sensible, as, for instance, in insisting upon good quality of wares, and in trying to prevent people from creating artificial scarcity by buying up quantities of goods with the hope of being able to sell again at higher prices. But he looked at the good of the whole country—at the nation and not at the town. And he did something to check the exclusive spirit which he saw around him. He could not believe that it was wholesome that a Londoner should be regarded as a “foreigner” in Southampton, or a Newcastle man as a “foreigner” in York; and though he did not break down the town privileges altogether, he took them under his royal regulation. Thus, by being the first English king who followed a *national* commercial policy, he set an example which his successors followed.

Royal regulation of Guilds.

National legislation, national treatment of commerce, a national Parliament in which all classes were represented, all bear witness to Edward's idea of a “united English nation”. But Edward was not content with this. He aimed at something much wider—a *united British race*. He strove to join under the English crown both Wales and Scotland. In his first object he succeeded: in the latter, he failed. The story of these enterprises is the next main subject.

An early Great Britain.

Conquest of the Welsh marches.

The Conqueror had hedged in the Welsh by setting on their borders the most warlike of his barons, trusting thereby to employ their turbulent energy to his own gain. His son Rufus blundered into South Wales with an invading army, only to find his slow-moving mail-clad array helpless against the nimble Welshmen. He speedily saw his mistake, and returned to his father's policy, making in it, however, an improvement. He left the task of coping with the Welsh to the barons on the marches—the “lords marcher”—but he stimulated them by granting to them all the land that they could conquer. Piece by piece the lords marcher drove the Welsh back. Each forward step was secured by castles, whose remains still crown so many hilltops in South Wales. The Welsh were pinned in among the hills in the rugged north. All that



remained to them was "the principality", the Snowdon country (Merioneth and Carnarvon, and the Island of Anglesea).

Had things gone on thus, an effective but no doubt very brutal conquest might have been completed. But in the reign of Henry III came a sudden revival in the Welsh power, such as often occurs in a downtrodden race. The barons, too, were fighting among themselves, and the Welsh prince, Llewelyn ap Gruffydd, took Simon de Montfort's side, and induced Edward to buy him off in 1269 by surrendering much of the country that had been conquered. Llewelyn, not content with the success of his first effort at fishing in troubled waters, tried again. In 1277 he planned a marriage between himself and Eleanor, the dead Simon's daughter. This being clearly a prelude to rebellion, Edward led an army into Wales. Llewelyn retired with his forces into the Snowdon range, feeling sure that the mountains would fight his battles should Edward follow him. Edward was much too wise to try. Instead of wasting his men among steep rocks he blocked all the passes, brought up a fleet to guard the coast, and starved Llewelyn out. Yet, when the Welshman surrendered, Edward did not treat him harshly; he made him pay homage, which he had already done in 1269, but left him some of his power, and let him marry Eleanor.

Llewelyn,  
Prince of  
Wales.

But in the attempt to settle the conquered country, by dividing it into shires after the English fashion, and bringing in English laws to replace the Welsh ones, Edward stirred up much bad feeling. Five years later David, Llewelyn's brother, rebelled. Llewelyn at once joined him. Their plans failed completely. Llewelyn was killed in a single combat by one of Edward's followers; David was captured and put to death as a traitor. The north thus came into Edward's hands, and later, in 1301, he showed that he meant to keep it by bestowing on his son the title of the Prince of Wales, a title which has since become familiar in our history. The strong castles of Harlech and Conway still bear witness to his firm grasp of the Principality.

Death of  
Llewelyn,  
1282.

In his dealings with the Welsh, Edward showed no desire to be harsh. He was determined to be master of the country, and to make his power a reality; but it was not till Llewelyn and

(1271)

10-11



David proved themselves traitors to their words that Edward became relentless in destroying all elements of Welsh rule. It was not till statesmanship and treaty proved useless that he used the blunter method of conquest. In his dealings with Scotland we shall see Edward pursue the same plan. When his schemes failed he resorted to force. But while little Wales could be crushed, Scotland proved more stubborn.

Before studying the circumstances which tempted Edward to meddle in Scotland, we must see what the kingdom of Scotland was, and how it had been formed.

## 2. Scotland

### § 1. *The Makings of Scotland*

In this chapter we have to notice : (1) how the various kingdoms in Scotland had come under one rule ; (2) how the English language had spread in the country ; and (3) in what way the kings of England had regarded it as a kingdom in some sense subject to themselves.

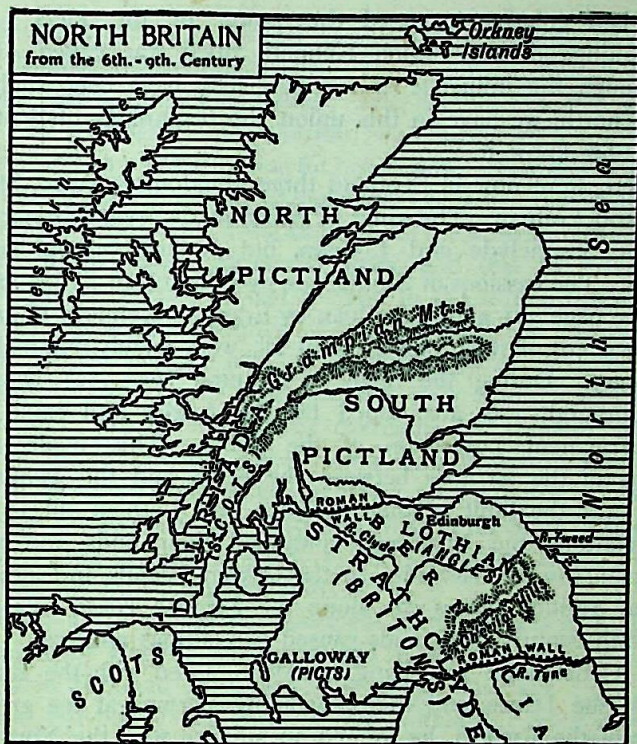
The beginnings of Scotland are in a way like the beginnings of England, though they are even less familiar than the story of the rivalry between the kingdoms of Northumbria, Mercia, and Wessex. Four separate districts have gone to make up Scotland as it is now: the land of the Picts, which included all Scotland north of the Forth and Clyde, except Argyllshire; the kingdom of the Scots (originally an Irish people), in Argyllshire; the kingdom called Strathclyde, which stretched originally from the Clyde to the Ribble, inhabited by Britons—of this, however, only the northern part came into Scottish hands; and, last, the district called Lothian, inhabited by Angles. This included the east coast from the Forth to the Tees; but here, as in the case of Strathclyde, the southern part has fallen to England and not to Scotland.

The kingdom of the Scots and the northern part of the British kingdom seem, from fairly early times, to have been under the hegemony of the Picts.

Picts, Scots,  
Britons, and  
Angles.

The uniting  
of kingdoms.





The way to complete union was prepared by St. Columba, who had landed in Iona in 563. The Scots, who had come from Ireland about sixty years before, were already Christian, and Columba converted the Picts, thus giving the two peoples a common faith. There was no permanent union, however, for many years, and, indeed, at one time it seemed as if the Angles would overrun the whole of North Britain. Their hopes were dashed in 685 when the Picts and Scots defeated them at Nectansmere. Union actually began in 844 when Kenneth MacAlpin, King of the Scots, ascended the Pictish throne. There was probably some fighting, but Kenneth had a legitimate claim through his mother (among the Picts inheritance through the mother was the rule), and his success was made possible by the raids of the Northmen,



which had greatly weakened the power of the Picts. The united kingdom over which Kenneth ruled was called Alban, and though the influence of the king may have been slight in the far north, we have in this union the beginnings of Scotland as we now know it.

There were now in Scotland three kingdoms—Alban, Strathclyde, and Lothian. The kings of Alban made several attempts to conquer Strathclyde and Lothian, but at first without lasting success. The cessions of Strathclyde by Edmund to Malcolm I in 944 (see page 37), and of Lothian by Edgar to Kenneth II in 966 (see page 40), if they took place at all, were merely nominal and temporary. During the reign of Indulph (954-962) Dunedin or Edinburgh was abandoned by the Angles and came into the permanent possession of the Scots. This made them masters of the territory between the Forth and the Pentlands, which was the limit of their advance into Lothian till 1018.

Meantime the Northmen continued their raids and made settlements in the Hebrides, in the Orkney Islands, in Caithness, and at various places all along the Scottish coast. Early in the tenth century these raids caused two curious alliances. First of all Constantine III, King of Alban, allied with the English against the Danes, and then, becoming alarmed at the growing power of the English, he formed an alliance with the Northmen and the British of Strathclyde against the English. In 937 he was defeated by Athelstan, King of the English, at Brunanburgh (see page 36).

The efforts of the kings of Alban to conquer Lothian continued, and at last Malcolm II, with the aid of the Strathclyde Britons, completely defeated the Angles at Carham Battle of Carham, 1018. in 1018, and annexed the country between the Forth and the Tweed. In the same year Duncan, a grandson of Malcolm, became king of Strathclyde, and when Malcolm died in 1034 he became first ruler of the kingdom of all Scotland.

Lothian, the last of the possessions to be gained, was a Spread of English speech. rich and fertile land, and it was English in speech. We must now notice how English speech gradually spread from Lothian over all Scotland except the remoter parts of the Highlands,



We may trace the working of this process beginning in the fairly familiar reign of Macbeth. In its history indeed Shakespeare's play is quite misleading. The Macbeth of his story is a relentless, cruel monster, who meets with a speedy death as a fit retribution for his crimes. Now Macbeth, who was chief of Moray, did, in circumstances of which our knowledge is incomplete, slay King Duncan and take the kingdom for himself. But his reign lasted seventeen years, and was by no means without glory. Also, he had a claim to the throne through his wife, who was a granddaughter of a former king. He gained the support of his people, beat off a Northumbrian invasion, was generous to the Church, and perhaps even made a pilgrimage to Rome. But he was at last overcome by Malcolm, son of Duncan, who defeated and slew him at Lumphanan in Aberdeenshire in 1057. The Macbeth depicted by Shakespeare was an invention of later Scottish historians who, in an effort to trace an unbroken line of Scottish kings to the Garden of Eden, treated the interloper with malignant spite.

Malcolm III (Canmore) had spent fourteen years in England, and he knew English speech as well as he did his own. He reigned in Scotland from 1057 to 1093, and saw England fall before the onset of the Normans. As the Norman power spread northwards, he felt his own throne to be in danger. He took up the Saxon cause, and to cement the alliance married Margaret, sister of Edgar Atheling, Saxon heir to the crown. Margaret was a very remarkable woman. The chroniclers admire her for being learned and pious, but she was also a keen politician.

She had great influence over her husband, who followed her advice in many ways. She wished to see things done as she had seen them in England. Thus she constrained the Scottish Church to abandon its own special customs in favour of those of the Roman Church, just as the English Church had done at the Synod of Whitby, four hundred years before, with the same result of bringing Scotland into a closer connection with the culture of Western Europe. In everything she did, and particularly by the introduction of English clergy, she helped to spread English customs and English speech. She thus became



the head of the English party against the Celtic party, and it is noteworthy that not one of her sons bore a name used by any Scottish king before. Four of them, indeed, Edward, Edmund, Edgar, and Ethelred, were named after Anglo-Saxon kings.

Naturally this was resented by the Celtic nobility, and after Malcolm's death Donald Bane, Malcolm's brother, drove out the English-speaking officials and tried to return to old ways. Duncan, Malcolm's son by his first marriage, deposed Donald in 1094, but was slain a few months later. Donald was then restored, and made a bargain with his nephew Edmund, a son of Malcolm and Margaret, to divide the kingdom between them. For a time it seemed likely that Scotland might be definitely divided into two kingdoms—a Gaelic-speaking kingdom north of the Forth, and an English-speaking kingdom south of it; but at last Edgar, son of Malcolm Canmore, overcame Donald Bane. The army with which it was done was largely aided by Normans. When the war was over, these remained in Scotland, and thus a Norman element, bringing Norman names, was added to the population of the country. On the death of Edgar, his brother Alexander I became king, but the youngest brother David (afterwards David I) held the district south of the Forth and Clyde as an earldom. David succeeded to the throne in 1124. These three brothers all helped to complete the work started by their mother, Margaret, and Alexander and David founded many monasteries and endowed them lavishly. This plantation of monasteries was accompanied by the organization of the Scottish Church on a diocesan system. The constant aim of the kings of the Canmore dynasty was to mould feudalism in Scotland to the Norman type already introduced into England.

We have already dwelt on Malcolm III's marriage with Margaret since it led to the supremacy of the English-speaking part of Scotland over the Celtic. But it had other results too. Malcolm, as a relative of the old kings of England, became an enemy of William the Conqueror. Hence we have a fresh reason for wars between England and Scotland. Indeed, it was while invading England that Malcolm was slain. Henry I desired to end this hostility by the same method that caused it, namely, a marriage. He mar-

Revival of  
Celtic party.

Alliance with  
Norman kings  
in England.



ried David's sister Edith, or, as she is known in English history, Matilda. Thus David was Henry I's brother-in-law; and just as Margaret had brought in the English influence, Matilda strengthened the Norman party in Scotland.

We may note how at the most critical periods in Scottish history royal marriages have played a momentous part. We have Margaret and Matilda. Our minds instinctively turn on to another, Margaret of England (sister to Henry VIII), and to the unfortunate Mary Queen of Scots, and we may add one more Margaret, who did not live to be married, but whose union could not have failed to be of the deepest consequence. This is Margaret, the Maid of Norway. The seeker after coincidence will notice that all the names begin alike.

Scottish royal marriages.

Alliance with the family of Henry did not bring peace but a sword. David, as uncle of the Empress Maud, and also as a Norman baron,<sup>1</sup> was involved in the quarrel between Maud and Stephen. He did not play a very disinterested part in it. Like many others, he could not resist the temptation of fishing for himself in troubled waters, and though he was defeated in the Battle of the Standard,<sup>2</sup> yet he managed to get Stephen to surrender to him Northumberland, Durham, Cumberland, and Westmorland. Henry II, however, looked on this just as he looked on the rest of Stephen's actions, and he did not intend to be bound by it. He compelled David's successor to restore the four counties, and being lucky enough to capture William the Lion at Alnwick, he compelled him in the Treaty of Falaise to do homage for his whole kingdom. More than once William came to England to repeat the homage, and the superiority of the English crown would have been clear enough had not Richard I, as has been related, sold William his homage back again.

Treaty of Falaise, 1174.

Thus the whole relation between the two countries was in a tangle. The English kings had tried to make out some claim to be lords over the kings of Scotland. They could point to

<sup>1</sup> By his marriage with Matilda, granddaughter of Siward, Earl of Northumbria, he held the Honour of Huntingdon, the Earldom of Northampton, and a claim on the Earldom of Northumberland.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 71.



gifts of territory and to acts of homage. On the other hand, the kings of Scotland could say that these gifts really implied nothing; that the homage was for English earldoms which they held, and not for their Scottish dominions; and that if any homage was due for Scotland itself, Richard's bargain had cancelled it. Yet so far there was no national enmity between the two. They did not glory in being different races. They fought indeed at times, now one side winning, and now the other. Yet even at the Battle of the Standard David of Scotland fought under the flag of the Dragon, the same sign as that which King Alfred had used, while a Robert Bruce, an ancestor of the Scottish patriot king, was in the English ranks. Scotland had not yet begun to think of England as a tyrant, nor did England look on Scotland as a rebel. Indeed, for the great part of the thirteenth century the two kingdoms were at peace. Both Alexander II and Alexander III married English princesses; both were wise rulers, who did much to unite Scotland and strengthen the royal power, without either attacking England or admitting the English supremacy. The more bitter feeling which becomes so marked in the next century was to spring from the doings of Edward I.

### § 2. *Edward I and the Scottish Throne*

The end of the reign of Alexander III was darkened with disasters. One by one the king's children died. Alexander, indeed, was still vigorous. He was only in his forty-fourth year; by a second marriage he might still raise up heirs for the kingdom. Unhappily these hopes were futile. The king himself was killed by falling over the cliffs while riding back at night to rejoin his queen. The only direct descendant was a granddaughter, Margaret, the child of Eric, King of Norway.

The Scottish  
succession.  
Death of  
Alexander III,  
1286.

Here Edward saw his chance of drawing still closer the destinies of Scotland and England. The kingdoms were on good terms. His plan was to unite them by a marriage between Margaret, Maid of Norway, and his own son, Edward, Prince of Wales.



No one can deny that the plan was good, always provided that it was to be wisely carried out. People felt this at the time, for the Scottish Estates wrote to Edward, "we on our part heartily consent to the alliance, not doubting that you will agree to reasonable conditions". Edward was very reasonable. In the Treaty of Brigham, which arranged the matter, it was laid down that Scotland was to retain her laws, rights, and liberties, and to remain a separate kingdom. Edward made no claim to the overlordship of Scotland at this time, but he certainly was planning for a future union of the kingdoms. To Scotland in general this idea seems to have been not unacceptable—the two nations had long been at peace (indeed, at that time there was no man living who could remember Anglo-Scottish warfare), the anglicisation of Scotland had smoothed over disparities of race and custom, and union seemed an almost natural sequel.

Unluckily all depended on the Maid of Norway, and she fell ill on the voyage from her father's country to Scotland, and had to be landed in Orkney, where she soon died. Thus Edward's scheme fell to pieces, and, what was far worse, Scotland was left without a direct heir to the throne.

Death of the  
Maid of Norway,  
1290.

Edward might have acted more wisely if he had recognized that his great chance was gone, and had given up any idea of further interference in Scotland. But this was just what Edward could not do. He ordered the learned men of his kingdom to produce evidence showing that Scotland was really a vassal kingdom of England. As a result there was collected a great mass of extracts from chronicles, some of which were fictitious, all of which were doubtful in so far as they referred to a permanent vassaldom. Edward, however, was satisfied that they established his claim to overlordship, and he was further encouraged by a request from several of the rival claimants to the Scottish throne that he should act as umpire between them.

Edward as  
umpire, 1292.

Yet here he and the Scottish barons committed themselves to a course, the only end of which was an appeal to arms. It is all very well to act as umpire: what if the umpire's decision is not accepted? Choosing one candidate is sure to disappoint

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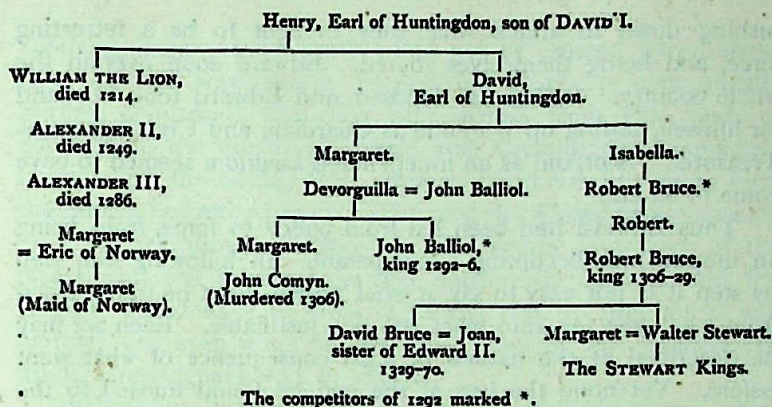


the rest. None could imagine that a powerful sovereign like Edward would allow his decision to be defied. Yet the only way to support it was by force. And this meant a struggle of the weak to avoid the dictation of the strong.

Englishmen are too ready to look solely at Edward's object, and to forget his unwise and afterwards violent methods; Scots sometimes only see the latter, and accuse the king of deliberate treachery in all he did. Edward thought of the old English claims over Scotland in the narrow spirit of a lawyer. And, in any case, he wanted to believe in their authenticity. The Scots urged that any homage done by Scottish kings had been for lands in England, and that William the Lion's homage for his whole kingdom had been annulled by Richard I (p. 98). But Edward had determined to be lord over Britain, cost what it might. The Bruces and the Balliols were equally determined to fight for their own interests. Thus, if we argue about oaths and rights we are wasting our breath. Edward may have broken oaths, but Robert Bruce did the same. English troops harried and burnt, and Scottish troops retaliated in kind.

When the Scottish barons met Edward at Norham, Edward made it clear that he claimed to be acting as Lord Paramount over Scotland. The candidates and their supporters Norham, 1292. might have withdrawn then and there. They did not; on the contrary, the nine candidates present, and most of the clerical and lay magnates of the country, after due deliberation, admitted Edward's claim. We cannot call them selfish poltroons ready to sell their country for the chance of a crown, for it is clear that so far the mass of the Scottish nation did not resent Edward's claim. They believed that he would make an honest choice; they hoped that he would content himself with the mere title of Lord Paramount; and in any case they were influenced by the fear of civil war, and by the threat of the army which Edward had brought with him. Edward was still acting honestly, if somewhat domineeringly. A court of eighty Scots and twenty-four Englishmen tried the question. John Balliol, Robert Bruce, and Hastings, had the best claims. In November, 1292, Edward, acting on the decision of the commission, placed Balliol on the throne.





The reign of John Balliol is always regarded as a disgrace alike to king and nation, but it is hard to see that Balliol could have done better. Edward took care, before he set him on the throne, to make him swear **John Balliol and his difficulties.** to be obedient to him; but the Scottish nation had not the slightest intention of letting him be obedient. A quarrel at once broke out. Macduff, brother to the Earl of Fife, appealed to Edward against one of Balliol's decisions. Edward bade the Scottish king come to England, as his vassal, to have the case tried there. It was clear that if he refused Edward would dethrone him; but if he obeyed his own people would cast him out. He could either keep his oath and betray his country, or be true to his country by breaking his oath. Such was the unpleasant choice set before him.

Balliol strove to gain time. He protested; he actually came to England. But the Scots had by this time made up their minds. They drove out all Englishmen and seized their **Breach with England.** estates. They persuaded Balliol to make an alliance with France (1295). As Edward was at war with France, this was open defiance.

As soon as Edward could disentangle himself from his difficulties with France, he marched with an army into Scotland to subdue one whom he looked on as a rebel. He stormed Berwick, where the townsmen were brutally massacred, and his general, Surrey, defeated a Scottish army at Dunbar—the Scots



rushing down to attack what they thought to be a retreating force, and being themselves routed. Edward soon overran the whole country. Balliol was deposed, and Edward took Scotland for himself, setting up Warenne as Guardian, and Cressingham as Treasurer. Scotland as an independent kingdom seemed to have come to an end.

Thus Edward had been led from policy to force, from being an umpire into becoming a combatant. In following him step by step it is not easy to say at what precise point he transgressed from what was fair into what was not justifiable. Each act may be described as the natural or legal consequence of what went before. Yet none the less at the end he found himself in the position which only "Might" could turn into "Right". He had undertaken to crush a nation because its chief men had broken faith with him, and this to one whose motto was "Keep troth" may have been reason enough. But the life of a nation cannot be forfeited in this way, and Edward, whatever he thought of himself, was bound to appear to the Scots as a foreigner, aiming at conquest.

Rise of  
national  
feeling in  
Scotland.

### § 3. *The Story of Scottish Independence*

From the first no one had liked Balliol. Yet when a king of England showed that he meant to conquer Scotland and make it part of his kingdom by force, the whole of Scotland determined to resist. Hitherto Edward had had, in the main, to deal with the Scottish barons, some of whom were of mixed Norman descent, practically all of whom had absorbed the feudal sentiment of fealty to the liege lord. Now he had to encounter something quite different, Scotland in arms against him.

The hero round whom this national spirit gathered was Sir William Wallace, a great soldier and a good man. He was joined by a considerable force, though few nobles supported him; either they thought his cause too hopeless to risk their estates, and so were lukewarm, or they were jealous of him as an upstart. Warenne and Cressingham moved from Berwick in search of him, and Wallace posted himself near Stirling. Stirling Bridge was a place of great military importance in



Scotland; below it the Forth could not be crossed by an army; close to the west lies a rugged hill district; consequently Stirling commands the only easy access from the south of Scotland to the north. Warrenne and Cressingham completely mismanaged the battle; their advance guard was in time to seize the bridge, but retired again. The next day Cressingham insisted on an attack though Wallace was now within easy reach of the bridge and the causeway leading northwards from it, and the English would have to cross it slowly, two by two, for it was narrow; not even when an easy ford close by was pointed out would Cressingham wait to use it.

Wallace coolly waited till a third of their force was over, then attacked, seized the causeway head, and cut to pieces the body who had crossed, while their comrades stood helpless on the other bank. Cressingham himself fell in the fight, and the whole force was scattered in headlong rout. One by one all the fortresses in English hands fell, and Wallace followed up his blow by leading his men to plunder in the northern counties. The pitiless ferocity of Edward's soldiers at Berwick found ready imitators among the Scots, who flayed the dead Cressingham and kept his skin as a token of their triumph, are said to have set fire to Dunottar Chapel, leaving the English garrison, who had taken refuge there, the choice between being burnt alive or casting themselves into the sea, and slew unarmed men, women, and children in the northern counties. Wallace himself could not control his followers. "I cannot", said he to the priests at Hexham, "protect you from my soldiers when you are out of my presence." But for English soldiers at any rate he had no mercy. To those who shrank from the butchery at Dunottar, he cried: "I will absolve you all myself. Are you Scottish soldiers, and do you repent a trifle like this, which is not half what the invaders deserved at our hands?"

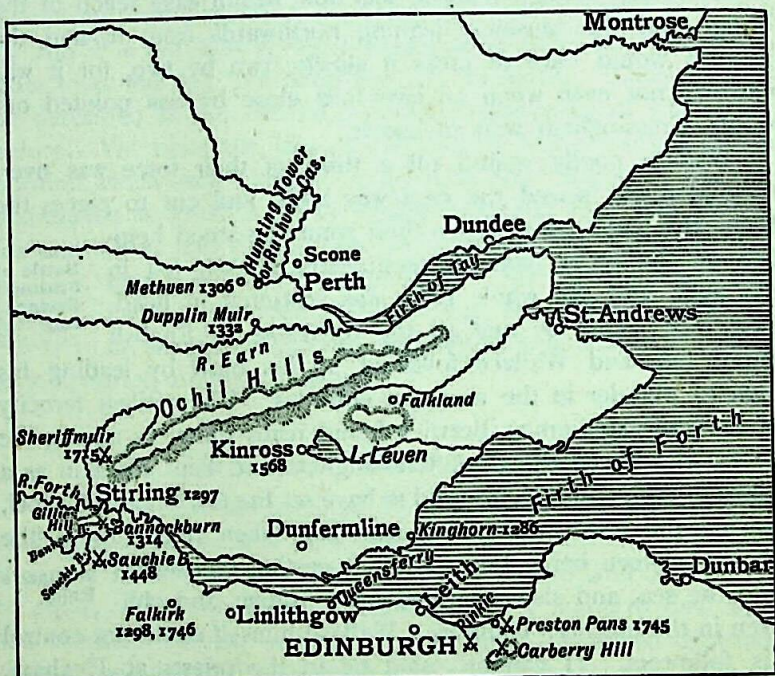
The  
Battle of  
Stirling  
Bridge,  
1297.

Wallace's  
Raid.

Edward was not the man to put up with this tamely. He hurried back from Flanders, and started in person for Scotland to crush Wallace, who had now been named Guardian of Scotland. But though it was easy to invade Scotland, it was not easy to draw the Scots into a battle. Wallace had wasted



the country, and withdrawn his men north of Edinburgh. The king could not discover where he was hiding, and had much difficulty in feeding his own army. At length two Scottish nobles, who either were genuinely in Edward's service or could not accept the low-born Wallace as a leader, revealed where the Scots lay. Edward set off instantly, and, making the utmost



speed, came on Wallace near Falkirk before he had time to retire. The main Scottish strength lay in their pikemen, whom Wallace formed into three bands or schiltrons. They had a few men-at-arms and a few archers. The battle began in the usual style, with a charge of the English knights; these drove off the Scottish men-at-arms and archers, but completely failed to break the pikemen; in fact, they were forced to retire in confusion. Here came the critical point in the battle. Had Edward continued to hurl his horsemen against the pikes, the Scots might have beaten off all attacks,



and remained victorious. Edward, however, was no foolhardy feudal warrior who despised his enemy. He held up his cavalry for a space and bade his archers advance, directing a concentrated fire on particular spots in each schiltrons. Under the arrows the pikemen fell fast; they could make no reply; their own archers who might have answered the storm, and their men-at-arms, who could have driven off the archers, had been beaten from the field. The steady array wavered, and when Edward, seeing his chance, poured in a third charge, Wallace's men broke and fled. It is said that 15,000 Scots fell.

For seven years Edward strove to complete his conquest. He led army after army into the country, but so long as Wallace was at large the resistance went on. At length, in 1305, Wallace was betrayed by some of his followers to Sir John Menteith, who was acting as Edward's sheriff in Dumbarton, and by him handed over to Edward. Menteith is generally called a traitor for this, and as a Scot he acted treacherously to his country. Still, he had taken Edward's side, was Edward's officer, and in capturing Wallace was so far doing his duty to the master he had chosen. Wallace was taken to England, and tried as a traitor to King Edward. He denied that he could be a traitor, since he had never sworn to obey Edward. But the king had him condemned. He was hanged, and his body, cut into four pieces, was fixed on the gates of Newcastle, Berwick, Stirling, and Perth. Edward meant to warn the Scots against further risings, but he made a great mistake. His merciless treatment of Wallace only made the Scots hate him the more.

Capture and  
Death of  
Wallace.

Andrew Lang<sup>1</sup> sums up Wallace's life in these words: "We know little of the man, the strenuous, indomitable hero. He arises at his hour, like Jeanne d'Arc; like her, he wins a great victory; like her, he receives a sword from a saint; like hers, his limbs were scattered by the English; like her, he awakens a people; he falls into obscurity, he is betrayed and slain. The rest is mainly legend. He seems ruthless and strong, like some sudden avenging Judge of Israel; not gentle and winning like the Maid, but he shares her immortality.

<sup>1</sup>*History of Scotland.*



"For the scattered members, long ago irrecoverable, of the hero no stately grave has been built, as for the relics of the great Marquis of Montrose. But the whole wide world, as Pericles said, is brave men's common sepulchre. Wallace has left his name on crag and camp—

'Like a wild flower,  
All over his dear country'."

With Wallace dead, Edward might think that Scotland was subdued. In a year, however, the Scots had found a fresh leader. Robert Bruce, the grandson of Balliol's rival, had not given up hopes of the crown. Hitherto he had played no more patriotic or consistent a part than most Scottish nobles; he had sworn fealty to Edward, broken it to join Wallace, deserted his cause in turn and made his peace again with Edward, commanded Edward's artillery at the siege of Stirling, and at that very time entered into a treasonable "band" with Lamberton, Bishop of St. Andrews. This did not seem of much promise, particularly as Bruce followed it up by the murder of his rival, the Red Comyn, who was Balliol's nephew and was thus Bruce's most powerful rival. Bruce and Comyn met in a church at Dumfries to discuss their claims and Bruce's plans for an insurrection, and probably a sudden quarrel arose. Bruce stabbed Comyn—a wild act which seemed likely to mar his cause from the first. Not only had he defied Edward; not only, as a red-handed murderer, was he a foe of the Church and an outlaw; but, as his victim had a claim to the Scottish throne and was moreover the most powerful baron in Scotland, Bruce had begun by distracting with a fresh feud a country already, to all seeming, hopelessly divided in the face of the enemy. Moreover, the murder compelled him to act before he was ready, and left him no choice but to unfurl the standard of independence.

Bruce, however, acted with courage. He hurried to Scone, was crowned king, and gathered a few men. Aymer de Valence pounced on his scanty following at Methven, and scattered it. Bruce had to flee to the Highlands, where, though safe from the English, his own countrymen still sought his blood. John, Lord of Lorne, a cousin of Comyn, pursued Bruce to avenge his mur-



dered kinsman. From all these perils Bruce's own personal strength, and his faithful friends, of whom the chief was Sir James Douglas, "the good Lord James", preserved him. Still, so desperate were his fortunes that he had for a time to take refuge on the lonely island of Rathlin, near the Irish coast. His brother Nigel, taken prisoner at Kildrummie, was hanged, a fate which befell most of his supporters<sup>1</sup> who fell into Edward's hands. Hitherto Edward had been amazingly forbearing with men who had fought against him, usually accepting submission and restoring their estates. Wallace alone had suffered, and he was an outlaw. But now the king's patience was exhausted.

In 1307 the tide turned. Venturing over to Arran, and looking longingly across the sea at his own castle of Turnberry in Carrick, Bruce sent a spy; if there seemed a chance for a surprise, the spy was to light a fire. The spy found no hope, and lit no fire. But Bruce and his comrades saw one, and crossed. For some time he was hunted up and down Galloway and Ayrshire, but every now and again, as at Loch Trool and Loudon Hill, he turned on his pursuers and routed them; and each victory brought him fresh followers. At the English Court men ridiculed the outlaw as "King Hobbe", but Edward knew better. He made ready once more to march into Scotland with an army, but died at Burgh-on-Sands, in sight of the hills where Bruce had struggled so manfully.

Even had Edward lived, he could not have won in the end. He might have beaten Bruce, but he could not have conquered the Scottish nation and kept it down by force of arms.

His plans, promising as they were at the outset, had failed, and his efforts to force them to success had only made failure more hopeless. He had wished to unite England and Scotland; all he had done was to divide them more deeply than they had ever been divided before. Under the sturdy blows of the "Malleus Scotorum" had been forged the tough steel of a nation's character.

Bruce had seen enough of Edward I to realize how great was his gain in being rid of him. It was more glory, he declared, to win a foot of land from him than to wrest a kingdom from

Death of  
Edward I,  
1307.

<sup>1</sup> Two other brothers were captured and hanged a year later.



his son. Once the old "Hammer of the Scots" was gone, his son, Edward II, was revealed as a feeble foe. He trusted to favourites, who proved no more capable than he was himself. His reign was broken by discontent, thriftlessness, armed insurrections. While quarrels and jealousy paralysed England at home, she could not be vigorous in maintaining her hold on Scotland.

Step by step Bruce won his way. Aberdeen came into his hand; his brother Edward reduced Galloway to his obedience;

Bruce establishes his position as king. the French king gave him secret aid; in 1310 the clergy declared him—excommunicated man as he was—the lawful king of the land. One by one the

castles in Scotland were wrested from English hands. Lord James Douglas surprised Roxburgh; Randolph, Earl of Murray, captured Edinburgh by leading thirty daring men to climb the Castle Rock; but all the exploits were not left to the men-at-arms. A farmer named Binnock, engaging a body of countrymen to aid him, seized Linlithgow by driving a wagon of hay under the gateway, so that the portcullis could not be let down.

By 1314 Stirling Castle alone held out, and Edward II with an army of 20,000 men marched north to relieve it.

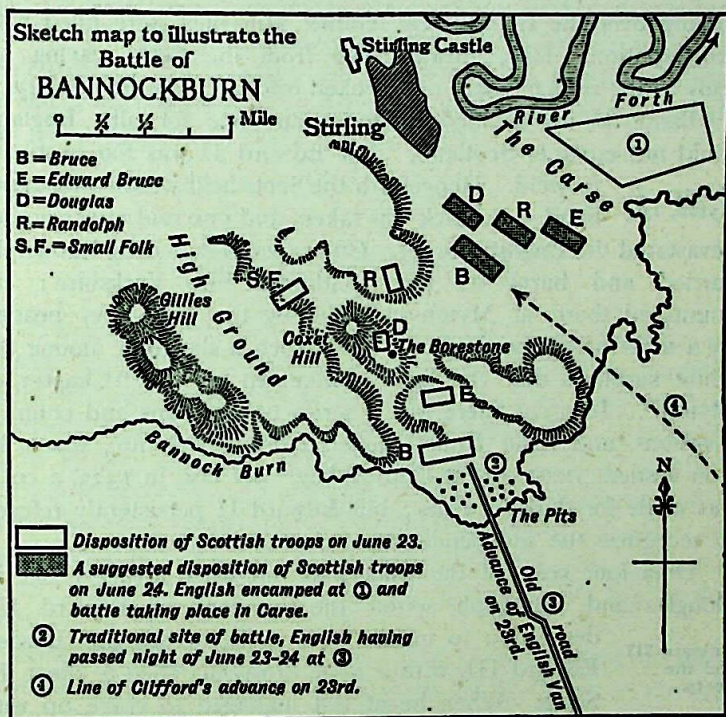
Battle of Bannockburn, 1314. Bruce awaited his coming near Stirling, and on June 22 drew up his men south of Stirling Castle

on the ground between the Forth and its tributary the Bannock Burn. He had five thousand men, and his lieutenants were his brother Edward, Lord James Douglas, Walter the Steward, and Randolph, Earl of Moray, but he had also 10,000 camp followers and "small-folk" (poor land-holders who, though excellent fighting men, could not afford protective armour) whom he sent to a place of concealment in the rear. His army, true to the Scottish tradition, was essentially an infantry force, while the English army was strong in heavy cavalry to which the footmen were mere auxiliaries.

On June 23 the English came in sight. A body of cavalry under Clifford crossed the Bannock Burn, but was routed by Randolph, while the English van after crossing the burn retired in disorder. What happened then has been the subject of much controversy. Some historians assert that the English army encamped where it stood, and that the battle next day was fought



on the site where the van had been repulsed; others hold that Edward marched his army northwards, crossed the burn, and passed the night on the Carse, the marshy ground between the Forth and the Bannock. Authentic information is so scant, and the arguments of both sides are so deserving of consideration,



that the matter will probably never be settled beyond all doubt. But whether the battle was fought on the high ground where Bruce was drawn up on the 23rd, or on the low-lying Carse, the main movements of the fight at least are clear. On the morning of the 24th, Bruce drew up his men in schiltrons (hollow spear-walls), which repeated charges of the English heavy cavalry failed to dislodge. Then a brilliant charge by his handful of light horse put the English archers out of action. Edward, because of the nature of the ground, could not bring his whole army into



action, and the English thrown into confusion by the awful havoc wrought by the Scottish spears, and hampered by dead men and riderless horses, were in dire straits. It was at this juncture that Bruce sent orders to the hidden "small-folk" to advance. He had chosen the very moment when their appearance would be of most assistance; and when the English saw this new "army" coming over the ridge of the Gillies' Hill they were filled with consternation. King Edward fled from the field, leaving his army to the unhappy fate of a broken force in a hostile country.

Bannockburn decided the question once for all. England could not conquer Scotland. But Edward II was too obstinate to yield. Henceforth the Scots held steadily the upper hand. Berwick was taken, and one raid after another devastated the English border. One expedition, led by Randolph, harried and burnt its way southward into Yorkshire; encountered there, at Myton-on-Swale, by the Shire levy headed by a mass of clergy, the Scots made such a slaughter among the white surplices that the fight was known as the "Chapter of Myton". In 1322 there was a series of invasions and counter-invasions, and King Robert penetrated to Yorkshire, where he won a small victory at Byland Abbey. At last, in 1323, a truce was made for thirteen years; but Edward II persistently refused to recognize the independence of Scotland.

Only four years of the truce had run when Bruce broke it. Douglas and Randolph seized the moment of Edward II's deposition to march once more across the Border. Edward III, with a large army, marched to meet the Scots. When he at last managed to come up with them they were so strongly posted that he dared not risk an attack across the River Wear. But what he did not venture the Scots did; James Douglas led a night raid into the English camp, and actually got to the royal tent before he was driven back. Then the Scots retreated by night, leaving their camp fires burning, so that the English did not perceive their going.

This was the last effort. In 1328 peace was made between the two nations at Northampton. Bruce was recognized as lawful King of Scotland, and England gave up all her claims. Scotland had triumphed.

Chapter of  
Myton, 1319.  
Edward III  
and the  
Scots..

Peace, 1328.



Robert Bruce's reign ended in 1329. For Scotland it was a memorable reign. Before its close he had obtained a mastery over all his foes at home and abroad. He had established the alliance between Scotland and France which was to lead to so much. He had freed Scotland from the foreign invader. He had united it as it had never been united before. All alike were ready to obey him. The barons, Norman in descent and hitherto half-Norman in feeling, had become good Scotsmen and good patriots. In the fire of national trouble there had been welded a nation, firm, self-reliant, confident, proud of its race and of its king.

## XVI. Edward II

In taking out the battle of Bannockburn from the reign of Edward II, in order to put it in its proper place with Scottish affairs, we rob the reign of the one event which is really notable. Otherwise it is extraordinarily barren of anything that is interesting or fruitful. It is not devoid of incidents; on the contrary, it is full of violence, but it is violence of the most sordid and selfish kind. Nothing comes of the violence; there is no progress; no strong character finds an opportunity of rising into greatness. In the midst of the turmoil all that floats to the top is the scum.

Kings, like ordinary men, sometimes stand revealed by their favourite tastes. William I was a great hunter, "loving the red deer as their father"; Richard I enjoyed the struggle of a tournament; Henry VIII was a mighty wrestler and great at casting the bar; each of these tastes somewhat betrays the man; Elizabeth's wardrobe illustrates her vanity, just as the love of "sauntering" tells us more than a little of Charles II, the leaden saints round the brim of the hat display Louis XI of France, and the homely leg of mutton and apple dumplings describe George III. Edward II also had his favourite amusements. He was fond of rowing and driving, and proud of his skill in digging ditches and thatching roofs.

Character of  
Edward II—



And he loved also to play at "cross and pile": that is to say, tossing a coin and crying heads or tails.

He was a weak man, placed in a situation which made the worst of his weakness. He did not carry on the work that his father had begun in the consolidation of England; still <sup>and of his time.</sup> less could he complete the task which had proved too much for his father, namely, the conquest of Scotland. He was unlucky too in the men about him. Even Henry III, who was no more apt as a ruler, had a great churchman and minister in Stephen Langton, and an illustrious rebel, Simon de Montfort. Edward II's friends and foes were alike men of no value.

Incapable of ruling himself or his realm, Edward trusted the task to favourites. The friend of his boyhood, Piers Gaveston, had been much disliked by Edward I, and banished Gaveston. from the court. The young king at once recalled him, made him Earl of Cornwall, married him to his niece, and put him over the heads of all the nobility. Naturally vain and empty, the elation of success turned Gaveston's brain. He combined insolence and incapacity in all he did. His one talent appears to have lain in the bestowing of rude nicknames, which were appropriate enough to stick and pointed enough to sting. The nobles, assembled in Parliament, agreed immediately that he must be banished; but though they drove him out they could not keep him out. A solemn assembly of the Great Council in 1310 appointed "Lords Ordainers", who were intended to take the government out of the king's hands, and these officers did indeed produce a scheme of reform known as the Ordinances, which included the appointment of responsible Court officials, the summoning of Parliament, and, of course, the perpetual banishment of Gaveston. Edward II brought him back again for the third time in 1312, but this proved to be his end. He was besieged and captured at Scarborough, taken south into the midst of his enemies, the Earls of Lancaster and Warwick, and beheaded by them on Blacklow Hill. The "Hog" and "The Black Dog of Arden"<sup>1</sup> taught him that as he had made them afraid of his wit, he might well be afraid of their memory.

<sup>1</sup> Gaveston's nicknames for the two Earls.



Scottish troubles filled the next few years, and the disaster of Bannockburn was turned to advantage by an ambitious noble. This was Thomas of Lancaster, son of Edmund Crouchback, the younger brother of Edward I. Thomas held from his father the earldoms of Lancaster, Leicester, Derby, and expected to succeed, through his wife, to the earldoms of Lincoln and Salisbury. His chief exploits up till now had been the destruction of Gaveston and his refusal to go north with Edward to Bannockburn, a piece of fortunate prudence which enabled him to push off all share for that disaster on his cousin, the king. For a year or two he practically ruled the kingdom, till Edward grew restive under his control. As Lancaster's chief allies were great men on the Welsh border, Hereford and the Mortimers, Edward sought to set up a party for himself in the west, and promoted a pair of new favourites, the Despensers, father and son, to wealth and possessions. This proved a prelude to more disturbance. The Despensers were banished in 1321, but the king, showing some energy for once, collected an army, crushed the western nobles, and drove Lancaster in flight northward. The king's friends turned him at Boroughbridge, where he strove to cross the Ure, scattered his men, and took him prisoner. His fate could not be doubtful. He was beheaded at Pontefract and a number of his adherents hanged or imprisoned; among the prisoners was Roger Mortimer.

Thomas of Lancaster.

The Despensers.

Time was the only thing needed for a fresh outbreak against the king to gather. His promises, indeed, were well enough. In 1322 he and the Despensers repealed the Ordinances, and declared that affairs of interest to the realm were to be treated in Parliament, "as hath heretofore been accustomed". But, as "heretofore accustomed", the feebleness of the king and the greediness of the Despensers soon supplied cause for a new plot. This time it was hatched in France, where it was safe. Roger Mortimer joined Queen Isabella, who had gone to France to pay homage. She brought over her son, and the conspirators removed to Hainault, the queen refusing to return to England, and openly discarding her marriage vows. In 1326 the plot was ripe. As soon as the conspirators



landed, all that were discontented—and that was the greater part of England—joined them. The king meant to flee to Ireland, but dawdled aimlessly on the Welsh marches till he was captured with his friends, the Despensers. They were hanged; the king was deposed and imprisoned. Soon afterwards he was murdered in Berkeley Castle.

Overthrow  
of the king.

Thus the internal history of the reign is the familiar one of feudal rebellion; we have seen it over and over again—in Stephen's reign, in Henry II's, in John's, in Henry III's. It succeeded in the first and failed in the second, because one king was weak and the other vigorous; in the third and fourth instances it has a certain gloss cast over it by the presence of great men such as Stephen Langton and Simon de Montfort, and by the beginnings of English liberties in the Great Charter and the House of Commons. Edward II's catastrophe has nothing to redeem it; it is a sordid tale of selfish violence and family ambition. Yet, while the details are confusing, and the outcome seems to lead nowhither, there are one or two points which will become of importance later, and may therefore be noticed.

First, then, we observe the "Favourite". He is a man raised up by favour of the king from a more or less insignificant position, as a counterpoise to the power of the old noble families. This is true of Gaveston, and to a certain extent true of the Despensers. But it must also be noted that the "favourite" was also the king's chief agent in carrying on the government. Thus he was not only the recipient of favour, but the bestower of it also. To use a word of much more modern meaning, he was a sort of "minister"; yet he differed from a true minister in that he held his place solely by the king's favour. Some men can be placed unhesitatingly in one class, and some in the other. Buckingham, for example, was a "favourite"; Walpole was a "minister". The distinction is clear. Buckingham held his place by the king's favour, and Parliament could not, despite its efforts, turn him out, whereas Walpole depended for his place upon his majority in Parliament. Between these two men we may find others whose position is less clear; what precisely are we to call Strafford, Danby, or Marlborough? It is plain that they are not either completely independent of Parlia-



ment, nor completely dependent on it. But the point of interest in Edward II's day is that the old hereditary nobility, who naturally hated favourites as upstarts, and regarded the right of filling the king's great offices as belonging to themselves, strove to control these appointments. In 1309, and again in 1322, the name of Parliament was invoked, and an attempt made to limit the king's freedom of choice, but to no real purpose. The fact was that Parliament was still but a name, and had no effective power; it had ideas, but could not enforce them.

Just as Gaveston is interesting as a type, so is Thomas of Lancaster. Mention has been already made of his possessions and expectations: Earl of Lancaster, Leicester, Derby, with the inheritance of Lincoln and Salisbury. In days when titles meant lands and lands meant power, this was a menacing collection. Compare this Earl of Lancaster with another, by name Henry, also (Duke) of Lancaster, Earl of Leicester, Derby, and Duke of Hereford. The similarity is startling, and becomes still more startling when it is added that he, too, was a king's first cousin. This Henry of Lancaster, whom we shall meet later<sup>1</sup>, is, of course, John of Gaunt's son, Bolingbroke, who overthrew his royal cousin, Richard II, and became King Henry IV. Had Thomas won the battle of Boroughbridge instead of losing it, it is likely that he also would have ousted his royal cousin, Edward II, and become King Thomas I. The interest of his position lies in his being a forerunner in that long struggle in which the younger royal branch of *Lancaster* was to prevail over the older line. He tried the first fall and was thrown; his kinsman was destined to prove a better wrestler. The position of the buckets<sup>2</sup> would change anon.

<sup>1</sup> See p. 200.

<sup>2</sup> *King Richard to Bolingbroke.*

"Give me the crown.—Here, cousin, seize the crown  
On this side my hand and on that side yours.  
Now is this golden crown like a deep well  
That owns two buckets, filling one another;  
The emptier ever dancing in the air,  
The other down, unseen and full of water:  
That bucket down, and full of tears am I  
Drinking my griefs, while you mount up on high."

—Shakespeare, *Richard II*, Act IV, Sc. I.



Further, as Thomas of Lancaster's ambitions foreshadow the systematic treason of the house of Lancaster and the Wars of the

Roses, so, too, the methods of Edward II's day foreshadow the methods of the time that knew Margaret of Anjou, Clifford, and Richard III. The headsman's axe and the halter became for the first time familiar political engines in English controversy. Gaveston, Lancaster, the Despensers, Mortimer, and many of their friends and followers came to violent ends; and the merciless policy of silencing political opponents by putting them to death was to become so ordinary as to seem, to men of the time, natural.

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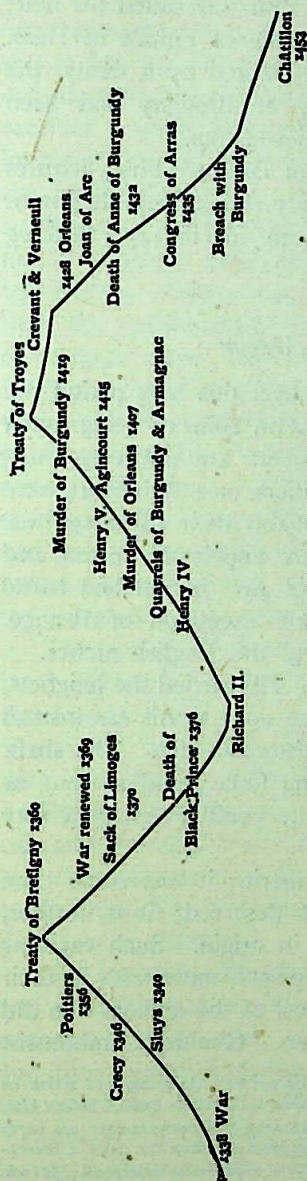
## XVII. The Hundred Years' War with France

### I. Edward III and Richard II

1327-1399

Edward III's reign began in 1327. He was, however, only fifteen years of age, and the real power lay in the hands of the queen, Roger Mortimer, and the Council of barons. **Overthrow of Mortimer.** These had been united in the hostility to Edward II, but there agreement ended. The Council was soon shaken by quarrels between Mortimer and Henry of Lancaster (younger brother of Thomas). Each schemed against the other. Mortimer surprised a plot headed by Edward II's half-brothers, the Earls of Norfolk and Kent, and punished the Earl of Kent with death. This piece of violence, added to the facts that the Government had been singularly unsuccessful in its dealings with Scotland, and that all were scandalized by the conduct of Mortimer with Queen Isabella, turned everyone against him. Edward acted quickly and decisively. He caused Mortimer to be seized and hanged, and, by imprisoning his mother, Isabella, he freed himself from leading strings.





The Two Waves of the Hundred Years' War

In Edward III's reign the main thread of the time is not far to seek. It is found at once in the war with France. Plainly, however, the "Hundred Years' War"—for so it is named—will lead far beyond the reign of Edward III. War did not indeed go on all the time from 1338 till 1453. There were The Hundred Years' War. truces now and again, and often long ones. But, speaking generally, for a hundred years England and France were enemies. In following this extended period of history, which covers the reign of five English kings, it is convenient to fix in the mind some landmarks.

The war may be divided into two periods of great success and two periods of failure; two huge waves of victory, each slipping away in its turn into a deep trough of defeat. The first wave covers the early part of Edward III's reign. We have the Battles of Crécy and Poitiers, and the Treaty of Bretigny, in which the French king admitted the English claim to the south-west of France. This was followed by a time of decline in the latter part of Edward III's reign, and of complete failure in Richard II's, when a French force landed in Sussex. The second wave began to rise with Henry IV, and reached its crest with Henry V. He outdid

the glory of Crécy and Poitiers by his victory at Agincourt; he



married the King of France's daughter, and was called his heir; his infant son Henry VI was crowned king of France in Paris. The summit of Henry V's glory was marked by a treaty, the Treaty of Troyes, just as the Treaty of Bretigny had been the highest point of Edward III's achievements.

But then came the second period of failure. First, Joan of Arc, and then the breach with Burgundy shook English power. By degrees all was lost that had been won, till, in 1453, nothing was left to England but Calais.

### § 1. *The English Archer*

The striking fact in the war is that over this long period the English won the great battles, and that in spite of being much weaker in numbers. Chroniclers' numbers are not very trustworthy, but neither at Crécy, nor Poitiers, nor Agincourt were the French less than three to one; probably their advantage was still greater, yet in every case they were hopelessly beaten, and indeed, until the appearance of Joan of Arc, no pitched battle went against the English, with the one exception of Beaugé. This superiority in the field was due to the English archer.

Everyone knows his characteristics. He carried the longbow, a large and stiff weapon. He drew the cord to his ear instead of to the breast, as the shortbowman did. The shaft, The long-bowman. thus driven, flew with amazing force; and so long as the archer was supplied with arrows, he could keep up a very rapid and accurate fire.<sup>1</sup>

Curiously enough, with all these merits, it was some time before the longbow was valued as it deserved; it is, further, probable that it was not even English in origin. Such captains as Richard I and Simon de Montfort placed more faith in their "arbalestiers" or crossbowmen, and most of the archers who did such execution at Falkirk were Welshmen. Giraldus Cambrensis,

<sup>1</sup>The archer usually carried twenty-four arrows in his quiver. On going into action he emptied his quiver, and thrust the arrows, point downwards, into the ground before him. The longbow was effective to about 180 yards, and arrows would carry to over 300 yards as an extreme range: in rapidity of fire it exceeded any musket before the days of breech-loading. The difficulty with archers was to keep them supplied with arrows. It was common for them to be reduced to picking up the enemy's missiles, or even tearing them out of the dead and returning them.



who was familiar with Wales in Henry II's reign, records the extraordinary powers of the South Wales archers. He himself saw at Abergavenny the iron points of arrows piercing the massive oak door four inches thick, while one of the Norman knights received a shaft that struck through his mail shirt, his mail breeches, his leg, the wood of his saddle, and sunk deep into the horse's flank.

Whether the English copied the longbow from the Welsh or not, it is further clear that longbowmen could not of themselves win battles. They shook the Scots at Falkirk, but, as we have seen, the cavalry took the credit of the victory; many thousands of archers were with Edward II at Bannockburn, yet the battle was completely lost. Moreover, even granting that archers were effective against the Scots, they might not be equally good against the French. The Scots fought on foot, mostly armed with spears or pikes, but the French main strength lay in their mounted men-at-arms, and since the battle of Hastings it had been a universal belief in Europe that no infantry could stand before a charge of this heavy-armed cavalry. It was not enough to have archers; the thing was to use them properly.

The prelude to the Hundred Years' War was played in Scotland. There the tactics which made the archer irresistible were developed; there, too, arose the first pretext for the Hundred Years' War, for the Scots had sought help in a French alliance; there had been a fierce sea fight in the harbour of St. Mahé in Brittany between the English and Gascon sailors on one side and Normans and French on the other, in which the French had the worst of it; and while Edward III was invading Scotland, Philip VI of France had poured an army into Edward's dukedom in Gascony.

The establishment of the line of Bruce on the Scottish throne was a crushing blow to the party who had still clung to Balliol and the English cause. They had been driven from Scotland, and their estates forfeited. When Robert Bruce died, and was succeeded by his son David, this handful of the "Disinherited" determined to make one last stroke <sup>Battle of Dupplin, 1332.</sup> to regain their estates. Edward gave them no active help; but, gathering a scanty force, they landed in Fife, under the leadership



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of Edward Balliol and Henry de Beaumont. Never did cause seem more desperate. They were but 2000 strong, 500 men-at-arms, the rest archers. The Scottish force, under Mar, which advanced to meet them, was 22,000 men—eleven times their number.

Beaumont drew up his scanty force on a hillside, the men-at-arms, dismounted, in the middle; the archers, hidden in the heather, spread on the wings in a half-moon formation. The Scots advanced to the attack with one huge central column intended to crush the men-at-arms, while two smaller ones on the wings were to account for the archers. The weight of the charge drove back the "Disinherited's" centre, but, aided by the hill, they managed to stand, and for the moment the battle stayed, with the lances of the opponents locked tightly, and with scarce room to swing a sword. Meanwhile the archers had so plied the flank columns with arrows that they shrank in on the centre, and increased the pressure and confusion. The whole mass became wedged together helplessly. The men-at-arms hacked at the front ranks; the archers, who closed in on the flank at short range, riddled the rest. "More", says the chronicler, "fell by suffocation than the sword; the heap of the dead stood as high as a spear's length." The Scottish army was annihilated, while of the "Disinherited" some thirty men-at-arms fell, and not one single archer was killed.

This comparatively unknown battle of Dupplin, this victory of David over Goliath, is worth study, not because it led to any great results in Scottish history; Edward Balliol was indeed proclaimed king, and Edward III judged it a good occasion to strike in and support him, though both had soon to abandon their plans; but because it is the pattern of the tactics which made English arms for so long invincible. The essence was to dismount the men-at-arms; to take up a strong position and fight a defensive battle; to dispose the archers thrown forward on the wings under natural cover if it could be found, or support them with the infantry if natural cover failed. Then the enemy was left to attack; the infantry would stop the attack, and the archers would break it. It made little difference whether the attack was made by men on foot or by cavalry. The men on foot moved



more slowly and offered an easier mark, but the horseman was a larger mark, and the downfall of men and horses soon threw the charge into confusion.<sup>1</sup>

So the battles were won, not because the Englishman was braver, or a better fighter, but simply because, having a better weapon and a better system of tactics, the English armies were able to kill huge numbers of the enemy without suffering much themselves. This is what wins battles in all ages. When the musket had superseded the bow, the same system won again. It was thus that Wellington beat the French in the Peninsular war; by fighting in *line* against the French columns he got a better fire-control and an overwhelming rain of bullets at marks which could not be missed. The French, being in column, could not use their numbers to reply effectively to the converging fire that met them.

## § 2. *Crécy and Poitiers*

France provoked Edward to war by her invasion of Gascony in aid of the Scots. But Edward was by no means unwilling to embark on a war. One English king after another had ruled large possessions in France. Since John's day, however, these had dwindled. Gascony alone remained, and the fact that the French had been eating into it for some time was in itself quite sufficient provocation for war. Yet beyond this, the traditional policy of an adventurous English king was to seek to recover the lost provinces. If we may transplant a phrase out of its proper age, we might say that the natural field for English "expansion" in the fourteenth century lay in France. Edward went a step beyond his predecessors: even Henry II, whose domains in France were wider than those of the French king himself, acknowledged himself to hold those domains from the king. He was after all a vassal. Edward, however, boldly claimed the Crown of France as his own.

<sup>1</sup>The battle of Halidon Hill (1333) illustrates again the uselessness of the Scottish pike-men against archers. Edward was besieging Berwick. To relieve it the Scots had to bear his covering army, and were therefore obliged to attack. Their columns, advancing up the hill, were so riddled with arrows that very few reached the English lines. And when at length they broke and fled, Edward's mounted men cut them to pieces in the retreat.



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Thus the Hundred Years' War differs from all the wars between France and England which precede it. These, in the French king's eyes at all events, were civil wars or feudal wars; the struggle of a feudal tenant against his suzerain. The Hundred Years' War was a national war, in which Edward III and, after him, Henry V played the part of a foreign conqueror. Hence the bitter feeling which developed as the war continued.

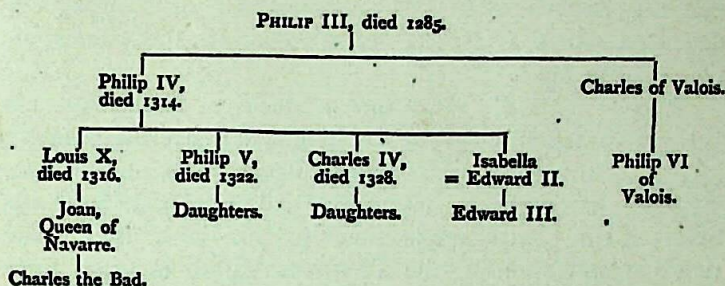
Edward III's claim to the throne was a mixture of policy and ambition. It was policy, in so far as it gave a cloak of right to what would otherwise have seemed pure aggression, and it offered a reason to those French dependents such as the Flemings who were ready to fight against their French master, all the more if they could allege that they were not rebels in doing so. Moreover, England as a wool-growing land had a close connection with Flanders, the great centre of dyeing and clothmaking. But we may be sure that the ambition of adding the French Crown to the English one also attracted the king.

The claim itself to the throne was a poor one. The three sons of Philip IV<sup>1</sup> had reigned and died leaving no male heirs. Edward, through his mother Isabella, was Philip IV's grandson. The throne, however, had been given to Philip IV's nephew, Philip of Valois (Philip VI). The French argued that by the old custom of the Salian Franks (the so-called *Salic Law*) which governed the succession to the French throne, no woman could succeed, and that therefore Edward's claim through a woman was worthless. Edward refused to accept this argument. But by doing so he knocked the bottom out of his own case, for though the three brother kings had left no sons, they all had daughters, and one of these daughters had a son, Charles the Bad of Navarre. Thus, if the Salic law held, Philip of Valois was the rightful king; if it did not, Charles the Bad should be on the throne; either way Edward had no title. Moreover, having, in 1328, done homage to Philip VI for Gascony, he had tacitly admitted Philip's title, and barred his own. Legal reasoning, however, was of as little real value here as in Scot-

<sup>1</sup>The "fatal three", Louis X, Philip V, and Charles IV: compare the extinction of the house of Valois with Francis II, Charles IX, and Henry III (also three brothers).



land in the days of Edward's grandfather. Armed men were the only arguments that would command a hearing.



Having then laid claim to the throne of France; having secured as allies his two brothers-in-law, the Emperor Louis of Bavaria and William of Hainault, as well as the Flemish leader Jacques van Artevelde; being enthusiastically supported at home by all classes, who voted supplies with that eager liberality which accompanies the beginning of a war, Edward opened his campaign. Two fields of operation offered. The north-east, which lay close to England and to his Flemish allies; and the south-west, where his own duchy of Gascony gave him a convenient base. That there was a certain sense of material advantage in Edward's methods, as well as the quixotic ambition which led him to claim the throne, appears in the fact that these two districts, the north-east and the south-west, were, commercially speaking, the richest in France, the centres respectively of the woollen industry and the wine trade. Merchants would readily support a king who was warring for the control of such rich markets.

War began in 1338, but the early years were singularly unfruitful. No battles took place on land; Edward's allies died or left him. The one achievement was the naval battle of Sluys where Philip tried to guard the Flemish coast, but Edward's fleet proved too strong for him. Even at sea we remark the supremacy of the archer, and the new English tactics. Edward used his ships, just as he was in the habit of using his men: they were grouped in threes, archers on the flanking ships, and men-at-arms on the centre one.

Sluys, 1340.



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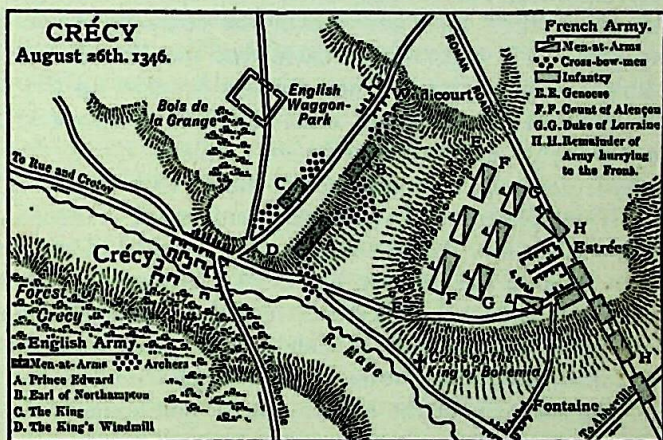
The archers shook the defence; the men-at-arms boarded and beat down what resistance remained. Save for the difference that the English made the attack instead of standing on the defensive, Sluys is on the water what all the battles of the time are on land.

It was not till 1346 that a decisive battle was fought. Edward landed a force near Cherbourg to divert the French from an attack on Gascony. Beyond this object, however, **Campaign of Crécy.** his plans do not appear skilful. He loitered up the Seine, giving Paris ample time to put itself in a state of defence, and allowing the French to gather in great force on the northern bank of the river. He failed to surprise Rouen, and, eventually cutting loose from his base in Normandy, hazarded a flank march across the country to join the Flemings. He gave the French the slip at Poissy, crossed the river, and, marching now in desperate haste, covered sixty miles in four days, and drew near the Somme. To his consternation the bridges were all broken, and the fords guarded. He moved down the river, getting into greater difficulties, for the river grew more and more difficult to cross. A French host was already at his heels, when a peasant betrayed to him the place of the very last ford on the river, Blanchetaque. By a moonlight march Edward crossed at low water—for the Somme there is tidal—and the rising tide prevented immediate pursuit. For the moment he was safe: he had secured a retreat to Flanders. He now made up his mind to fight, should the French pursue him too closely. A suitable position was not far to seek. He found it between Crécy and Wadicourt. The impenetrable forest of Crécy covered his right flank. His left was more vulnerable, though the village and orchards gave fair cover. The front of a mile and a quarter was not too wide for his force, which numbered probably about twenty thousand men. Rather more than a half were archers; the remainder were partly men-at-arms and partly light-armed Welsh spearmen. The army was drawn up on the edge of the downland, and the archers were advanced in zigzags at intervals in his line, so as to be able to pour in a flanking fire, while they were themselves able to draw back if need be, with their own flank



secured by the men-at-arms. The Black Prince commanded the right, the Earl of Northampton the left. The king himself held the reserve.

Edward had completed the drawing up of his force, when the French vanguard, still thinking they were chasing a flying foe, stumbled on it late in the afternoon. Philip ordered a halt; he wished to attack in formal battle-order the next day, but the feudal nobles of his army paid no heed. The vanguard would not retire; the others as they arrived pushed



zealously forward. Their only idea of war was to fight the enemy as soon as he was within reach.

The result was a disorderly battle, fought without method, purpose, or combination. The Genoese crossbowmen began with volleys of bolts that hardly reached the English lines, but the longbowmen's arrows fell among them with such force as to pierce helmets and mail. In a few moments they were broken, and were falling back in confusion. The first line of French horsemen, led by Alençon, did not wait for them to get clear, but charged, in their impatience, through them, thus entangling themselves hopelessly. On them beat the pitiless arrow storm, scarce a shaft missing its mark. Of this charge hardly a man reached the English line. Meanwhile, fresh French forces had



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pushed forward and flung themselves into the mêlée with better success, for the blind King of Bohemia had the "one fair blow at the English" which he desired, and fell among the English spearmen. So the fight raged on, one charge after another as the French pressed on through the midst of their fallen comrades. Late in the afternoon the Black Prince was hard put to it, but not so hard that Edward thought it needful to bring the reserve into action. "Let the boy win his spurs:" thirty knights was all the aid he sent. At dusk the charges still went on and even into the darkness, but all shared the same fate. All night the English lay in their lines unaware of the complete havoc they had wrought. The next day revealed that the French had lost 1500 knights alone; the common soldiers brought up the total to near ten times the number, while the English loss was little over a hundred; only two knights were killed.

Crécy is generally reckoned among the decisive battles of the world. If completeness of victory is decisiveness, it deserves its place; it settled, too, the pretensions of the feudal chivalry who had been so long the military bullies of Christendom. But so far as the campaign was concerned, it settled nothing. Edward marched north and starved out Calais, turning out many of the French inhabitants, and putting a large English colony in their place. The survivors of the French nobles went home to wonder at their overthrow, but not to learn from it.

Ten years later the lesson was repeated. King John had replaced Philip on the French throne. Hostilities had languished Poitiers,  
1356. owing to the plague of the Black Death, which had fallen on Europe in the meantime. In 1355 the war flared up again, this time in the south. The Black Prince led a huge army eastward from Bordeaux, gathering plunder on all sides. He repeated the raid the next year, this time striking northwards, and then reaching the Loire followed it westwards to the suburbs of Tours. Here he learnt that the French king had moved from Blois to cut off his retreat. So he withdrew, and making the best speed he could, though laden with plunder, reached Poitiers. The two armies just missed falling in with each other on the march. The Black Prince slipped past, and John came up with him at Maupertuis, about seven miles to the south,



The Black Prince had about 7000 men, of whom 2500 were archers, the bulk of the remainder being men-at-arms with a few light troops; all were mounted. The French were about 20,000, but the levies just drawn from Poitiers were of poor quality. The English plight was so bad that on 18th September the Prince offered to release his prisoners and make a seven years' truce; but the French refused these terms. So on the next day the English made ready to resume their retreat, or fight if need were.

The English position covered the roads which led steeply down to the small, deep, wooded Miausson in the rear: a stone bridge crossed it at Nouaillé, a ford farther to the English left at Gué de l'Homme. Along the front of the position ran hedges, and in front of the hedges were vineyards. The vines, thickly planted and growing some four feet high, gave the archers excellent cover, and at the same time were impenetrable to horsemen. To the north the country over which the French would advance was open and gently undulating. Edward's first idea was to leave his main force, under Salisbury, holding the vineyards, while he sent off the baggage, under the escort of Warwick, by the Gué de l'Homme. But the French came up, and he had to stand to fight. His front was strong and his left flank guarded by the river; his right was more vulnerable, but feudal armies did not manoeuvre.

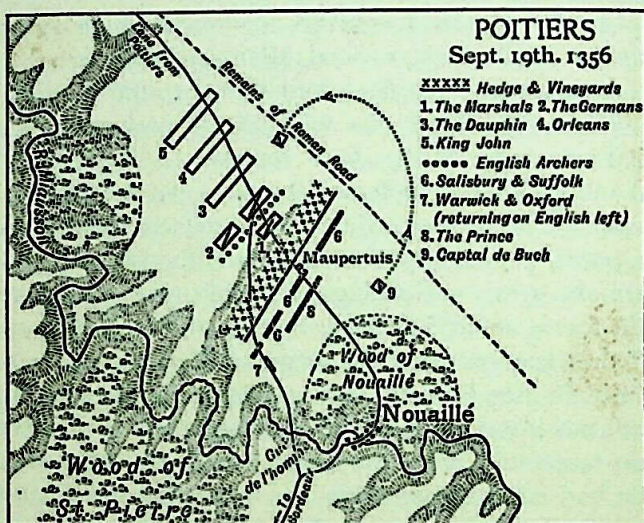
John had enough men with him to contain the English with one part, while he attacked and turned the English right with another. Probably he might have cut off the English retreat entirely. He was, however, determined to fight. Yet, with the disaster of Crécy in his mind, he determined to dismount the bulk of his men, probably on the advice of William Douglas, who recommended the Scottish plan. A forlorn hope led by two Marshals of France, and the first "battle" of the French, consisting mainly of German allies, kept their horses. This first attack was supported by the crossbowmen. The other three "battles", led by the Dauphin, Orleans, and the King himself, all trudged wearily on foot, for plate armour was so ponderous that it was hard work to walk a mile across heavy country.

In this array the battle was fought. The Marshals first charged, but the vines naturally made them "bunch" on to the



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road, where they were easily shot down by the English first line under Salisbury, who also beat off the Germans and the crossbowmen, though not without stern fighting. Then came on the Dauphin's dismounted troops, and renewed the fight. All the English save a small reserve were now fully engaged, and it was only by the greatest efforts that the French were driven back once more. At this stage the English seemed to be on the point of defeat. Eight thousand fresh French troops still remained. Of



the Englishmen some were dead and many wounded; the archers were seeking everywhere for arrows, even pulling them from the slain; all were utterly worn out.

At this point the battle was won by fortune, and generalship. Orleans' division fled in the wreckage of the Dauphin's without striking a blow. So went half of the remainder. John, with the last division, advanced to the attack. The Prince did not wait. He ordered all who had horses to mount and charge; and the whole force, leaving the shelter of the hedge, rode and ran down on the enemy, and the armies locked in fierce encounter. At the critical moment a Gascon knight, the Captal de Buch, who had been sent round a hillock on the



English right to make a flank attack, fell on the French left rear. He had but 160 men; but this was enough. A panic spread; the fainthearted ran; brave men—and there were many in the French ranks—stayed to fight it out around their king, and were made prisoners. Never was there such a haul of captives made: the king, his son Philip, twenty-six great lords, and close on nineteen hundred knights and persons of consequence. The capture of the king alone made the victory important. It was bound to lead to a satisfactory peace. The Treaty of Bretigny, in 1360, gave Edward all the duchy of Aquitaine, the county of Ponthieu, and Calais in full sovereignty. John was also to pay a large ransom. In return, Edward gave up all claim to the throne of France and to the Plantagenet dominions of Normandy, Maine, and Anjou. In a word, he gave up the shadow and grasped the substance.

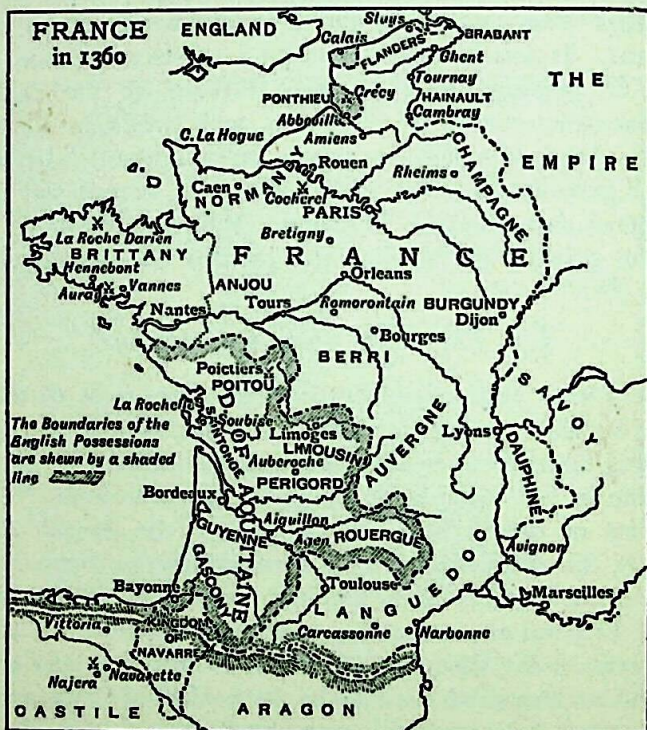
### § 3. *The First Period of Decline*

The Treaty of Bretigny (1360) marks the crest of the first wave of English success in France. The results may be summed up shortly under three heads. First, the acquisition of Aquitaine in full sovereignty, that is to say, free from <sup>Results of the war.</sup> all claims of overlordship on the part of the French Crown. Secondly, the establishment of a close connection between England and the Flemish cities, which is marked by: (a) the appearance of England as a sea power, wielding a supremacy of the sea, at any rate on the Channel; (b) by the growth of a busy trade in wool and woollen goods; and (c) by the holding of Calais as a door through which help might be given the Flemings, or attacks made on France. Thirdly, the perfecting of a new method of fighting, in which the old feudal chivalry became of little use when opposed to a combination of archers and infantry. It is well to bear in mind that these results were of solid value. Edward III's reign is sometimes described as being one of barren glory rather than of substantial gains: that is true in a sense only. Substantial gains were made: the fostering of the wool trade and a control of the chief markets for wool, the capturing of the wine trade of Gascony, the supremacy in the Narrow Seas, the invention of a



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system of invincible tactics, were all substantial additions to England's power. As a nation she stood far higher in 1360 than in 1327. But the gains did not prove permanent, and so the glory became barren. Edward's war policy had definite enough aims, and for the time attained them; it is only condemned by its failure to hold what it had won.



If we pass over very briefly the first period of decline, we shall at any rate be following the traditional policy of most national histories. The truth is, that from 1360 till the beginning of Henry V's reign the interest of English history lies elsewhere than in foreign invasion. England had much to attend to at home. The Black Death (1349-50) had swept away nearly a half of the population: the effects of this catastrophe led to the Peasant Revolt of 1381. Then Wyclif and the Lollards filled



men's minds with religious questions: the last years of Edward III were occupied with struggles among the great families to get hold of the reins of power. The proceedings of John of Gaunt and the Appellants were a foretaste of the baronial quarrels which were to develop later into the Wars of the Roses. Were we merely tracing the chronological sequence of events, we should leave the Hundred Years' War and relate these events here; but as we occupy ourselves rather with logical sequences, we may postpone them and follow the story of the war.<sup>1</sup>

The first period of decline—the falling from the crest of the wave to the trough—was not marked by any striking events. It was inevitable that the Peace of Bretigny would be broken on the first occasion. It was too disastrous First period of decline. for France to submit to it quietly, and the barons of Aquitaine, who had been handed over to an English sovereign, soon gave the French king, Charles V, a chance of interfering. War began in 1369—this time on more cautious lines. The French had learnt that to fight great battles meant to receive crushing defeats. “If a storm rages over the land,” said Charles V, “it will disperse of itself. So will it be with the English.” His chief captain, Du Guesclin, never gave the English armies a chance of striking a blow. Both the Black Prince and John of Gaunt led armies into the heart of France, but met no enemy. The French shut themselves in the towns, and left the English to burn, plunder, and retreat. As in those days the only way of reducing a fortified town was by famine, it was hopeless to undertake a hasty siege. A few rebellious towns were captured. The Black Prince did take Limoges, but the horrible massacre of its defenders only made matters worse. Instead of striking terror, it made all rebels resolve to hold out to the last. Thus, in face of a national resistance, a war of sieges, skirmishes, and surprises, the small English forces were worsted and beaten in detail. England was indeed worn out. The Black Death had robbed her of men; the money was wellnigh spent; the country was exhausted with taxes and tired of the war; the great leader the Black Prince was dying. By degrees the French regained all Aquitaine and Gascony, except Bordeaux and Bayonne. Fortune had so changed,

<sup>1</sup> In the Appendix will be found a table giving the chronological order of these events.  
(c 271) 12-13\*



that in 1377 England had to beat off French raids on Kent, and in Richard II's reign a French force encamped for a time in Sussex; but by this time the war had dwindled down. Now and again each country made a fleeting effort to molest the other; but for the most part time passed in a series of uneasy truces. Each enemy eyed the other, and waited for a chance. Both were too much hampered with feuds at home to be vigorous abroad.

## 2. Henry IV, Henry V, and Henry VI

### § 1. *Agincourt*

It happened that England recovered her strength first. At the very time when Henry IV had seized the crown, had beaten the alliance of the Percies, Glendower, and the Scots, who were trying to overthrow him,<sup>1</sup> and had really gained a strong position, France was falling into ruin. The king, Charles VI, was mad: the parties of Burgundy and Orleans battled for the business of ruling his kingdom. The Duke of Burgundy, whose chief dominions were in Flanders, was strong in the north-east of France, and was supported by the towns and especially by the lower classes in Paris. The Orleansists or "Armagnacs" were the party of the nobles; their stronghold was south of the Loire. In 1407 the Burgundians murdered the Duke of Orleans, and from that time on the affairs of the country swayed about as first one party and then the other gained the mastery. Henry IV intrigued with both, finally inclining to the Armagnacs, and intending, as the price of his support, to win back the lost English provinces. How hopelessly distracted France was, is revealed when we read that an English army under Clarence landed in Normandy, and was able to march unchecked to Bordeaux. Even in the worst days of the Wars of the Roses we can hardly picture a French army marching practically unmolested, say, from Bristol to York.

Henry IV died, and left his schemes to his more ambitious

<sup>1</sup> See Chap. XX, Part III.



son Henry V. He was more startlingly successful than Edward III at his best. He became the acknowledged heir to the French Crown. Had he lived he would have been crowned King of France in Paris, as his infant son Henry VI actually was. But if Henry V's success was greater than Edward III's, his task was easier. He did not conquer France; but with the aid of one half of France he mastered the other half. How important the attitude of Burgundy was to the English cause is revealed by the fact that each change in the course of affairs corresponds with either a tightening or loosening of the Anglo-Burgundian alliance.

Henry V.  
Renewal of  
the war.

Henry IV had leant to the Armagnac side. At the end of his reign, however, son and father had not been on good terms; and the son, while enlarging his father's policy, chose to reverse his methods. The Armagnacs offered him the hand of Katherine, daughter to the French king, and as dowry the lost province of Aquitaine with 600,000 crowns in gold; but this offer, tempting as it was, did not satisfy Henry V's ambition. He wished to be King of France. Accordingly he boldly claimed all that Henry II had held, western France from the Somme to the Pyrenees; and when that was refused, he revived Edward III's title to the Crown. That this could only mean war did not in the least deter Henry, for war was what he wanted. He had a touch of narrow-minded fanaticism in his character, and seems to have looked on himself as destined by heaven to restore order to France; the war was to his mind a kind of crusade. Yet he was an unusually practical crusader, for, besides being a competent soldier, he had a sharp eye for his own advantage.

War then flamed out again in 1415. Both Commons and clergy gave Henry liberal grants of money. With some ten thousand men he landed in Normandy and besieged Harfleur. After a siege of five weeks he took it, but at the cost of about a third of his force. It was but

Campaign of  
Agincourt,  
1415.

a scanty triumph, since no attempt had been made to relieve the town; at this rate it would be long ere France was conquered. With no very clear object, save perhaps an imitation of Edward III's policy, Henry set off on a march from Harfleur along the coast to Calais.



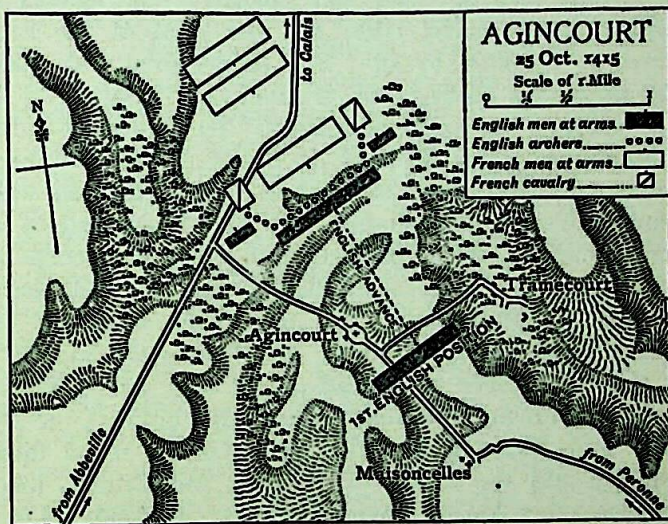
Here, in the first period of the war, had the French taken advantage of their chances, he ought to have been beaten. The parties of Burgundy and Orleans had patched up a sort of peace, and, though the Burgundians gave only a lukewarm support, an army was gathering under the Constable D'Albret large enough to crush Henry if it could catch him. Henry was marching as fast as he could, keeping close to the coast; he had even mounted his archers, but the October of 1415 was wet, the roads heavy, and Henry had trouble in crossing the Somme. He had to go a long way up it before he could find a way across, every step taking him farther from Calais. This delay enabled the Constable to cross first, to get between the English and Calais, and to bar Henry's path at Agincourt with 30,000 men.

It seemed that the Constable could not lose. He had every military advantage on his side. He was vastly superior in numbers; being astride the enemy's line of retreat, he could fight or not as he pleased, and he could choose his ground. He had but to avoid a battle and Henry would be starved into submission; even if it proved too difficult to hold in the feudal array to the ignominy of winning without fighting, he could take up a defensive position, and let the English handful attack. There was indeed only one card in his hand that could lose him the game, and that was to attack the English at once. Of course this was, so to speak, the attractive lead—the French feudal array loved to play a bold game—none the less it was a fatal lead, for it would give Henry the chance of fighting the one kind of battle which an army outnumbered five or six to one could win, namely, a defensive battle with the advantage of a superior missile weapon. Crécy and Poitiers had already showed what was likely to come of such tactics. But feudal leaders were not students of military history.

The Battle of Agincourt bears a certain resemblance to Crécy and Poitiers rolled into one. The French fought on ground far too narrow for their numbers. They allowed the enemy to shelter his weak point, his flanks, by woods; Henry had taken the additional precaution of making the archers supply themselves with long, sharp-pointed stakes which were to be



stuck in the ground to check the French charges. D'Albret perhaps did not wish to fight at all: had he been anxious for a battle he could have fought before, directly Henry was over the Somme, but he had kept more or less at arm's length, and only converged slowly on his enemy's line of march. In any case the English waited two or three hours in their position at Agincourt and the French did not stir. They were close enough, however, for Henry to be able to compel an attack



without losing the advantage of his position. He moved his whole line forward to within range and halted them: the archers fixed their stakes and began to ply the French with their arrows. Thus the French were forced to attack. First came two small bodies of mounted men who were easily checked. The main attack, dismounted knights in armour, toiled painfully over the wet ploughland that lay between them and the English. So heavy were the men and so deep the mud that no real attack was driven home; the mass stuck, a splendid mark for the English archers. When it had been well riddled, the English advanced and flung themselves on it. Being lightly armed, many of them without defensive armour save stout leather



coats, they could move freely when the enemy could not. Through the woods on the wing moved bodies of men-at-arms to take the French in flank. Thus the French vanguard and then the main line were overthrown and butchered, the dead lying two or three deep. The third division of the French army, shaken by the fate of its comrades, hardly fought. Though it alone far outnumbered Henry's entire force, it broke and fled at the first onslaught.

Agincourt taught no lessons in the art of war that had not been already read at Crécy and Poitiers. The fighting of a defensive battle against odds, and the value of the English bowmen is common to all. The narrow front with guarded flanks, the attack spent before it struck, are Crécy. The sharp stakes stand for the hedge at Poitiers. To Poitiers, too, belong the dismounted attack made by the French, the crushing English counter-attack, the flight of a whole French division without striking a blow. The student may find it amusing to draw other parallels. But the parallel which would have come home most forcibly to a Frenchman fleeing from the field on that fatal 14th of October, was that once more a pitched battle had gone near to ruin France; that there were 8000 of the best blood in France lying dead on the field, among them the Constable, Anthony of Brabant (Burgundy's brother), the Dukes of Bar and Alençon, with the lesser nobility round them in hundreds; and the Dukes of Bourbon and Orleans, together with 1500 other knights, were prisoners. England has in the course of her history dealt France many staggering blows on the battlefield. Sometimes the combatants have been fairly matched in numbers as they were in Marlborough's "Quadrilateral",<sup>1</sup> or in Wellington's sequence of victories in the Peninsula, or again at Waterloo. At other times, David, with the aid of a superior missile weapon, has brought down Goliath: the few have prevailed over the many. Agincourt is perhaps the most striking of all, not only in the disparity of odds, but in the completeness of the wreckage.

The blow fell heaviest on the Orleanists. The main share of the dead was theirs, and they took the whole of the dishonour.

<sup>1</sup> "B.R.O.M. 4.6.8.9."



Burgundy withdrew what lukewarm support he had hitherto given, and Henry was left to pursue his course of conquest. Three years of sieges followed, in which the most notable was that of Rouen, where the women and children turned out by the defenders from the hard-pressed town were callously and cruelly allowed to starve between the walls and Henry's lines. In 1419 Pontoise fell, and there was nothing left to bar Henry's march to Paris.

So far Henry had profited by the military skill which had given him an unexpected triumph over one great French army, and the paralysing disunion between Burgundy and Orleans which had prevented the collecting of another; but hitherto neither faction had actively helped him. Burgundy had remained like Achilles sulking in his tent—a malevolent neutral. Now, however, a piece of supreme and wicked folly was to turn that neutrality into enmity. A meeting was arranged at Montereau between the Burgundians and Armagnacs. John of Burgundy rashly crossed the barrier on the bridge that severed the two factions. In the sight of his followers he was set on and stabbed by Tannegui du Châtel, a violent Armagnac and friend of the Dauphin. It was but a retort for 1407. Blood will have blood. But this treacherous murder threw the Burgundians into the arms of the English. By the Treaty of Troyes, Katherine, the daughter of Charles VI, was pledged to Henry in marriage: he was recognized as heir to the French throne to the exclusion of the Dauphin; Philip, the new Duke of Burgundy, engaged to support him. In the autumn of 1420 Henry entered Paris in triumph with his bride.

Murder of the Duke of Burgundy. Anglo-Burgundian alliance.

Treaty of Troyes, 1420.

## § 2. *The Second Period of Decline*

The Treaty of Troyes marks the crest of the second wave. It was indeed higher and more imposing than the first. Instead of taking a quarter of France, the English king had married the French king's daughter, and was hailed as his heir. Everyone expected he would come to the throne. This, indeed, the accident of his early death prevented. Had he lived another two months he would have been crowned king in Paris. As it



was, his infant son Henry VI was proclaimed in his place. And then slowly but surely the English power crumbled away. The apparent explanation is that, so long as the strong king lived, things went well, and that when an infant took his place they went awry. This, however, is not the real explanation.

No doubt Henry V's vigour and military skill were hard to replace. Yet it was not his death that proved fatal to the English cause. Henry's brother, the Duke of Bedford, took up the post of Regent of France, and for six years, from 1422 to 1428, the English kept their ascendancy in the field, and made some progress in driving the Armagnacs southward. The only check between Agincourt and the relief of Orleans by Joan of Arc occurred at Beaugé, where the Duke of Clarence, attempting a surprise with a body of cavalry, was himself killed and his force routed. The chief share of the victory was won by the Scottish troops, who, keeping up the traditional policy of an alliance with France, had taken the field with the French. The Pope on hearing the news exultantly remarked, "Truly the Scots are a cure for the English." Beaugé, though a small affair in itself, was a startling success for the French, since it was so long since they had met with any. It served to put new heart into them for continuance of the struggle. After it English victories began again. At Crevant in 1423 and Verneuil in 1424 the French and Scots were utterly defeated. And finally, one cannot take the one disaster of Beaugé as typical of the weaker rule of Henry VI, for the excellent reason that the battle was in Henry V's reign.

When Henry V lay dying he showed clearly enough in his last words what was the prop of the English power in France, and the means by which it might be shaken. "I beg you all," said he, "to see that you have no quarrel with my fair brother of Burgundy, and above all to prevent from this my fair brother, Humphrey; for if that arrive, God help us." The friendship of Burgundy was, indeed, the key of the situation. We must see on what this friendship was based, and how it was finally broken.

English  
military  
supremacy.

Beaugé, 1421.

Death of  
Henry V,  
1422.

The Burgundian  
alliance.





One thing has been seen already; the spirit of revenge for the murder of Duke John. But note also that constant coupling of foreign policy with marriage policy. Just as Henry V had secured the help of the court party by his marriage with Katherine, so Bedford bound the young Duke of Burgundy to him by marrying his sister, Anne of Burgundy. The Burgundian alliance rested more on a family



bond between the chiefs than on affection between the subjects. Yet a doubter would scarcely take the side of the Armagnacs, for they had, so far, displayed no mark of political capacity. They had failed in everything they attempted. Even the fervent patriot is apt to grow chill when he is always the loser. But were circumstances to change: were parties to stand out in their true light: were the prosperous traitors of Burgundians to lose their prosperity, and the unsuccessful patriots of Orleanists to happen on success: then, as if by magic, all would be changed. Each party would be revealed in its naked truth—Orleanist as patriot, Burgundian as traitor, and Englishman as a national enemy.

This magic change came with the coming of the Maid of Orleans, commonly called Joan of Arc.<sup>1</sup> She was a peasant girl from Domremy on the borders of Champagne, who believed that she had been called by angel voices to deliver her country, drive out the invader, and crown Charles VII at Rheims. She went to Court and persuaded the king to accept her help. Clad in armour, and riding at the head of her troops, by her simple faith and piety she restored the hopes of the French. Salisbury had formed the siege of Orleans, the last Armagnac stronghold on the Loire, and was pressing it hard. When the Maid appeared before the town, broke into the city, drove off the besiegers, and defeated Talbot at Patay, it was as if the spell which had overcast French arms was broken. Heaven, hitherto averse, had taken pity on the French national cause. Not only was the relief of Orleans an immense military success, for it assured to the Armagnacs a gateway into the northern territory, whence they could harass the English, but its moral effect was still greater. The Maid's career was indeed short. She did see Charles VII crowned at Rheims in the centre of the enemy's country, but her army was beaten off from Paris. In 1430 she was captured at Compiègne, and in the next year burnt as a witch at Rouen. That piece of ferocity did not mend matters. She was dead, but the spirit which she had aroused lived after her. "Before her day," says the chronicler, "two hundred English would drive five hundred French before

<sup>1</sup> Her right name is Jeanne d'Arc.



them; but now two hundred French would beat four hundred English." Perhaps it must not all be put down to the Maid. The fact is that the quality of the French soldiers was improving. The disobedient, clumsy, foolhardy, feudal array no longer came into the field, for the best of reasons: most of it was dead. It was replaced by professional soldiers who knew their work, officered by men who would not run needless risk. Repeated disasters had at last taught the French not to hazard all on a pitched battle. And there was another cause at work. Sooner or later the curse of foreign invasion will weld a country into union. We have seen this in Scotland; we may observe it again in France. The burning of Joan of Arc did no more good to the English cause than the hanging of Wallace. It was no longer possible to say as Shakespeare makes King Henry say after Agincourt:

"O God Thy arm was here;  
And not to us but to Thine arm alone  
Ascribe we victory".

The soldier who looked on at the Maid's martyrdom and uneasily muttered, "We have burnt a saint", only voiced what many felt, that a curse had indeed come on the English cause.

Joan of Arc had fought and died. The Armagnac cause was lifting its head. At the same time the union between England and Burgundy began to give way. Gloucester and Henry V had rightly distrusted his "fair Burgundy, 1424. brother", Humphrey of Gloucester. Humphrey had already given great offence to the Duke of Burgundy by marrying Jacqueline of Hainault, a vassal whose dominions Burgundy had expected to secure for himself. He even went so far as to lead an army into Hainault against the Burgundians. Still worse was to come. In 1432 died Anne of Burgundy, Bedford's wife. This of itself was a blow to the alliance, but Bedford made matters worse by marrying the sister of the Count of St. Pol. St. Pol lay on the borders between France and Burgundy; the Count was one of these waverers who took, now one side, now the other. Bedford wished to attach him to England, but he forgot that in doing so he would offend Bur-



gundy. From that moment the Duke began to draw off from the English side. A congress met at Arras in 1435, when the French offered, to cede Normandy and Aquitaine in full sovereignty, if the English would abandon the claim on the throne. These terms—better than those which Edward took at Bretigny—were foolishly refused. Thereon Burgundy went over to the French; in the same year Bedford, whose ability alone had kept the English cause together, died. From that time onward the English cause in France was a lost cause.

The eighteen years from 1435 to 1453 form the last stage of the Hundred Years' War, a period of English disaster. Step by step we were beaten back. One small garrison after another was overcome. The year 1436 saw the French regain Paris; and, more ominous still, the Duke of Burgundy besieged Calais. Though all went wrong we showed a wonderful pertinacity in resisting. One noble after another, Warwick, York, Somerset, went to France and failed, yet none dared advise peace. One man had the courage to yield some in order to preserve the rest; William de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk, negotiated a truce, ceded Maine and Touraine, and arranged a marriage between Henry and Margaret of Anjou; yet the peace proved acutely unpopular; it is true that the French would hardly have kept it long, but it was the English who broke it, within four years of its making. And Suffolk scarcely survived his peace; he was impeached and banished, but his enemies did not mean to let him go. They waylaid his ship, seized him, and, using the gunwale of a boat as the block, caused his head to be hewed off.

The truth is, that, in 1450, England had fallen sick of the very disease from which France was recovering—madness in the head and paralysis in the members. For Charles VI we read Henry VI; for Burgundian and Armagnac, York and Lancaster; but the symptoms were the same. The court was surrounded by nobles all seeking their own advantage; private feuds came before patriotism. Neither party had the energy to stave off further disaster in France, nor the moral courage to withdraw. They could only be active in fault-finding.

The last stage,  
1435-53.

1444.



In 1453 Talbot led some six thousand men to drive off the French force besieging Châtillon on the Dordogne. His command was not much less than Henry V's at Agincourt, but he had men of different mettle against him. Battle of Châtillon. The French withdrew to their entrenched camp, beat off Talbot's charge, and eventually scattered his whole force in rout. Talbot himself was slain, "very old and worn with years". And with his death a war which was also "very old and worn with years" came to an end.

The close of the Hundred Years' War marks an epoch in English history. We have seen two distinct stages of English wars with France. The first belongs to the reigns of the Norman and Angevin kings, and was the natural result of English kings holding a double position, in being Dukes of Normandy and Aquitaine, Counts of Anjou and Maine. These wars were essentially feudal struggles between a feudal superior and turbulent feudal barons. The second stage is that of the Hundred Years' War, in which both Edward III and Henry V asserted a claim to be Kings of France; one wrested from France the great duchy of Aquitaine in full sovereignty; the other actually won the crown for his son. These were not feudal, but national struggles. It was not the Duke of Normandy against the King of France, but England against France. The enterprise of English politics was turned to conquest in France. France was regarded as Change in English policy. the natural field of English expansion. After many ups and downs this policy failed and was abandoned. When we again take up the story of English foreign policy under the Tudors we shall find that it has undergone a complete change. Wars with France did not indeed cease, but they were no longer wars of conquest. Further, England no longer thirsts for military glory. A new field of ambition has opened. Henceforth her eyes turn to the sea and across it to the New World.

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## XVIII. The Black Death and the Peasant Revolt

In following the Hundred Years' War to its end the domestic history of England has been passed by. We must return to the reign of Edward III to trace the outcome of three important historical events. The first of these is the Black Death, which left so deep a mark on the condition of the labourers and their dealings with the landowners; the second is the work of John Wyclif and the Lollards; and the third is that development of Parliament, which promised well, and yet proved premature, leading in its breakdown to the Wars of the Roses. We leave military history, and take up questions first of social history, then of religion, and finally turn to genealogy and those complicated matters of family relations and family ambition which are at the root of the trouble between the Red Rose and the White.

The Norman Conquest left the class who cultivated the land in the position of serfs. They were "bound to the land" (*glebae ascripti*) and had to give to their lords so many days' work each week ("week work") and certain extra days' work at the busy season of haymaking, harvest, and ploughing ("boon work"). Besides these they paid small "dues" of eggs, fowls, and so on. So long as these services and dues were paid, they might expect to remain in possession of the small plots of ground on the produce of which they lived, for although it was by no means clear that the law gave them any security of tenure, or would interfere at all between them and their masters, no lord would be tempted to drive off a well-behaved serf, since to do so would be to lose his labour. As time went on, however, many of the serfs *commuted* their services; that is to say, they had come to an arrangement with their lords to pay money instead of service; for example, if a man's labour was reckoned at twopence a day, he would pay sixpence a week if he had owed three days' work, and further

**Commution  
of Service.**



amounts for extra days. The plan was convenient for both parties: the serf got more time to work on his own plot of land; the lord got money with which he could hire labourers, and was saved the trouble of continually striving to compel unwilling or lazy serfs to do their work for him.

This plan of "commuting" services for money was spreading gradually over the country, but it was not complete, when it was interrupted by a disaster. This was the Black Death, a fearful plague which ravaged our island from 1347 to 1350. At least one-third of the whole population perished. It is literally true that often the living could scarce bury the dead. In the diocese of Norwich two-thirds of the parish clergy died: in a religious house at Heveringland prior and canons died to a man: of the sixty monks at St. Albans only thirteen survived. From what befell the ecclesiastics we can judge the mortality of laymen. Indeed, high and low, rich and poor, town and country fell before the pestilence. The manor rolls, which record changes among the tenants on an estate, show that often whole families were swept off, leaving none to inherit the land.

The Black Death.

It was in these rural districts that the effect was most felt. It is plain that labour would become very hard to get; and, further, since at the height of the plague men were so terrified that they left the harvest to rot ungathered in the fields, corn became scarce. This caused a rise in prices; and as prices rose, and labourers were few, we should be prepared to find a rise in wages also. In fact, this is what happened. Wages rose sharply.

Rise in Wages.

This all hit the landowners hard. To begin with, many of their tenants were dead, some without leaving heirs; and so they lost the payments for commuted service which these had owed. Further, they lost in another way. They had commuted services at the old rate of wages. They accepted, say 2*d.* a day, since for 2*d.* they could hire a labourer who would do the serf's work. But if wages doubled, the 2*d.* which represented a day's labour would only hire half a day's labour. And the rise was more than double. It was a common complaint that whereas a woman's labour had cost

Difficulties of the Lords.



$\frac{1}{2}d.$  a day, now it cost  $2d.$  or  $3d.$  Hence ruin stared the lord in the face if he had to receive at the old rates and pay at the new ones.

Something clearly had to be done; and as the landowners were strong in Parliament, we shall find their policy in tracing what Parliament did. The first idea was to check this rise in wages which seemed to them ruinous. No injustice was intended, because Parliament meant to check the rise in prices also; if prices remained the same, it was argued, there was no need for wages to rise.

Parliaments of our own day have not meddled in the matter of prices—unless in exceptional circumstances such as those that arose during the European War, when Parliamentary intervention became essential. For centuries these have been left to be adjusted by the conditions of supply and demand. But men of the fourteenth century took an entirely different view. Regulations about prices and wages did not seem in their day impossible or absurd as they may seem to us, because as a matter of fact almost all trades were under such rules. Every trade had its craft guild, which fixed the price at which its wares should be sold—a price that was supposed to be “fair” both to the buyer and the seller. Parliament was only attempting to do for the country what the craft guilds did for the towns.

In the series of laws called the Statutes of Labourers,<sup>1</sup> labourers were ordered to take the “old” rate of wages—that is to say, the rate current in 1347. It was one thing to make the order, and another to enforce it. The task proved too big. The authority of Parliament was not very active over all England at the best of times in the fourteenth century; but when, owing to the Black Death, all local courts were paralysed, laws were easily evaded. The rise in prices went on; and so long as prices did not fall, men could not live on the old wages. Yet the lords could not afford to see their estates left uncultivated: it were better to lose half than lose all; better to give higher wages than have no labourers. Thus many lords were tempted to break the very laws which were intended to

<sup>1</sup> Issued by proclamation in 1349; enacted as a Statute in 1351; repeated with additional penalties in 1357 and 1360.



protect them, by offering the higher wages which Parliament prohibited. Parliament truly showed no lack of vigour or courage in its opinions. It reinforced the Statute of Labourers by threats of imprisonment, branding with a hot iron, slavery, and even death. But even ferocious penalties will not make men obey impossible laws. If it was a choice between the certainty of starvation and the chance of punishment, none could doubt what the choice would be.

Here stood revealed the class interest of Parliament. We may find a justification in theory for their action: it may be allowed that they meant no wrong. But when their remedy failed, the selfishness of the landowners—and the landowners meant Parliament under another name—is betrayed in the obstinate savageness which added penalty to penalty to drive men into suffering. England was on the threshold of the first great struggle between labour and capital: the struggle between “we cannot” and “we will make you”.

The policy of trying to put the clock back failed: it was bound to fail. Some landowners, untaught by the first failure, tried to go further back and compel the serfs to pay their services again. This was hopeless. Men who have nearly gained freedom will not tamely consent to lose what they have won. Other landowners took to sheep-farming instead of corn-growing, and throve on that, just when their old enemies the serfs were looking forward to their ruin. In fact all the hopes which the serfs were cherishing seemed to be fading, and things becoming worse instead of better. This infuriated them; so did the Statutes of Labourers, which hindered them from getting a fair wage at home or from moving away to get work where wages were better. Discontented men clamoured against the lords. A Kentish priest, named John Ball, preached to the serfs, “Things will never go right in England so long as there be villeins and gentlemen; by what right are they whom we call lords greater than we?” and his teaching was echoed in the rhyme that ran through England—

Hostility between  
Peasants and  
Landowners.

John Ball and  
the Poll. Tax.

“When Adam delved and Eve span  
Who was then the gentleman?”



Rebellion only waited for an occasion, and the King's advisers gave it. They were at their wits' end for money. In 1377 a

**The Peasant Revolt.** poll tax of carefully graduated amount had been taken. In 1380 the tax was repeated, but much

less distinction was now drawn between rich and poor. The wealthiest paid but a pound; even the poorest paid a shilling. As a shilling at the legal rates of wages represented about a whole week's wage, the oppressiveness of it may easily be understood. It caused the smouldering discontent to burst into flames. In 1381 risings took place in East Anglia, and in all the counties near London. The most pressing danger came from the Kentishmen. Under their leader, Wat Tyler, they rolled on towards the capital, burning manor houses and the court rolls, which held the record of their serfdom, and hanging the lawyers "for", as they said, "not till these be dead would England enjoy its freedom again". The artisans of the city opened the gates. John of Gaunt, the young king's uncle, who was practically ruler of the kingdom, was absent in the north, the rioters pillaged and burnt his palace at the Savoy; they forced their way into the Tower, and murdered the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Treasurer, who had proposed the hated poll tax. Panic seized the Court, but King Richard II, a boy of sixteen, remained cool at a time when there was the utmost need of courage and coolness. He pacified

**Richard II and the Rebels.** the Essex rioters at Mile-End by granting them the freedom which they demanded, and as a pledge

caused royal banners to be delivered to the men of each shire as a sign that they were no more serfs, and that they were pardoned for their rebellion. Content with this, many went home, "but the great venom still remained behind" in the ringleaders, Wat Tyler, Jack Straw, and John Ball. Next day the King went to meet the Kentishmen at Smithfield. Their leader, Wat Tyler, rode up so near to the King that "his horse's head touched the croup of the King's saddle", and began a wordy wrangle with the King's attendants. Walworth, Mayor of London, thinking that he meant to attack the King, cut him down. The mob were bending their bows to shoot at the royal party when Richard rode forward alone and shouted to them: "I will be



your leader", and by fair words and promises got them to disperse quietly.

This exhibition of opportune bravery was worthy of the son of the Black Prince: unhappily the end was less creditable. The promises were not kept. True that the King had, End of the Revolt. in promising freedom, promised more than he should have done. He was giving what was not his to give; granting away the property of the landowners, for as we have seen the right to command the labour of serfs was property in the strictest sense of the word. Still, seeing that the King had saved the life of himself and his friends by his pledges, some effort should have been made to keep them. Unluckily the continued rioting in the Eastern counties, the burnings, murders, and brutalities, made it difficult to pardon the rioters. So, the first crisis over, the King employed force, and put down the Peasant Revolt with great severity.

Thus injustice had led to violence, as it often does, and neither party had gained. In few cases were the lords able to force their serfs to pay services again; on the other hand, many rioters were hanged, and the rebels did not get the abolition of serfdom which they had demanded.

Since labour could not be obtained at the old rates, nor services re-exacted without danger of violence and murder, it was necessary to pay the new rates, or to do with Land Let on Lease. less labour. Some lords granted land on lease to tenants for a rent, giving them stock as well as land. Thus the tenant had to find the labour; the lord was free of the difficulty. Here we have the beginnings of the modern farmer, a person who stands between the labourer and the landowner. Others, however, met the difficulty in another way. There was a great demand at the time for wool, and English wool was then the best that could be had. So, many Sheep-farming. lords started sheep-farming instead of arable farming. It paid better, because less labour was needed. Many labourers were required for a large arable farm; but when it was laid down in grass one or two shepherds could tend all the sheep on it.

Thus sheep-farming led to many men being out of employ-



ment; and as under the old system the serfs' small patches of land were often mixed up with the wide holdings of the land-

**Depopulation.** owner, now the latter came to wish to evict the serfs and take their land for sheep-farms. He enclosed also the "waste" or common land on which the serfs had pastured their cattle, and this, too, made it hard for the serfs to keep their holdings. Thus the landowners who had at first struggled to keep their serfs, ended by trying to drive them off altogether. No doubt great misery was often caused by this depopulation. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries Parliament tried to stop this process of enclosure for sheep-farms, but without much result.

So in the end the effects of the Black Death were extraordinarily wide. It changed the face of rural England. It broke up the old "manorial system": it prepared the way for modern conditions, under which land is let at a money rent: it did much to consolidate properties, and gave thereby the chance for the trying of better methods of farming: and in the end it caused serfdom to disappear. It was not that the peasants won freedom immediately by their revolt, for in some cases the revolt made their chains tighter. Yet this was only for the time. By degrees the labour of serfs came to be no longer required; and the lords granted freedom easily since serfdom was no longer worth keeping. The boon to the peasants, however, was an inestimable one. Their prayer had been granted—"Lord, Thou hast heard the desire of the poor: that the man of the earth be no more exalted against them".

## XIX. Wyclif and the Lollards

More than a hundred years before Martin Luther began his dispute with the Roman Church which ended in the Reformation, England had seen a churchman start on a very similar career. The story of John Wyclif and his followers, the Lollards, shows clearly that many people in England were dissatisfied



with the authority of the Pope long before the time came when the nation broke away from the Roman authority, and the Church in England became National.

The worst part of John's quarrel with the Pope had been that it opened the door to interference and taxation from Rome. This showed itself in Henry III's reign, when that king was flattered by the popes into making loans of money to help the papacy in its final struggle against the empire in the person of Frederick II and his descendants. <sup>Dislike of the papacy.</sup> England was regarded by the popes as a "well of wealth from which they could draw unlimitedly". A very great deal of English land was in the hands of churchmen, and the Popes strove continually to keep the churchmen under their own control, and cut them loose from the control of the State. For example, Pope Boniface VIII, in his bull, "Clericis Laicos", directed the clergy to pay no taxes to King Edward I unless by his consent. Edward retaliated by outlawing the clergy who refused to pay, and brought Boniface to withdraw. None the less, the independence of the clergy from the State was a point for which the Popes strove steadily, and which the State was sure to resent.

In Edward III's reign this anti-papal feeling became very strong. Men saw a great deal of money being sent to the Papal court, and they did not think it right that they should pay it; they saw, too, a great many foreigners who were appointed by the Pope holding rich livings, deaneries, and high posts in the Church, and they would have preferred that Englishmen should have these posts. They saw a few churchmen, each holding many livings, and perhaps never going near some of them, and they contrasted the fine clothes and crowds of servants of these men with the poverty of the parish priests. It seemed to them that these rich churchmen neglected their duty, and thought more of the good things of this world than it was right for them to do. "God," they said, "gave His people to be pastured, not to be shaven and shorn."

The feeling of the time is reflected very strongly by Chaucer, who, in the Prologue of his *Canterbury Tales*, hits off all the weak points of the churchmen. <sup>Chaucer and the churchmen.</sup> He describes the Prioress as dainty, frivolous, and amiable, wearing



a brooch with the motto, "Amor Vincit Omnia", and so soft-hearted that she would weep if she saw a mouse in a trap; the Monk, "full fat and in good poynt", who loved hunting and gaudy apparel more than

"Upon a book in cloystre alway to poure,  
Or swynke (work) with his handes, and laboure  
As Austyn<sup>1</sup> bid";

the Friar, an "easy man" to give penance, beloved and familiar with womankind, and

"The beste beggere in his hous,  
For though a widowe hadde noght oo schoo (one shoe),  
So plesaunt was his *In Principio*,  
Yet wolde he have a ferthing or he wente";

the Summoner, who taught that "purse was the Archdeacon's hell", but did not act up to his principles; the Pardoner, with wallet

"Bretful of pardouns come from Rome all hot,  
Who made the parsoun and the people his apes".

We must not think that all the churchmen<sup>6</sup> in England were negligent or careless; there were many then—as there always have been—who were bent on doing their duty to the utmost. Witness Chaucer's Poor Parson, who

"Waited after no pompe and reverence,  
But Christe's lore and His apostles twelve  
He taughte, but first he folwede it himselve".

Unfortunately it was not, for the most part, these men who were in high places. Bishops and the greater men were mostly little known in the countryside; monks led retired and sometimes lazy lives in their monasteries, but no one saw them. More bitter feeling was aroused by the friars, for they were in daily contact with the people.

That the friars, especially the Dominican and Franciscan Friars, should have become the object of dislike is at first sight not a little curious, for these orders were the result of one of those periodical "revivals" in religion which aimed at bringing the Church into more intimate connection with the poor, and giving them practical help and teaching.

<sup>1</sup> Augustine's rule, "*Laborare est orare*".

The mendicant orders.



Both orders began early in the thirteenth century. St. Dominic founded his—the Black Friars—to combat heresy and to strengthen faith. They were accordingly preachers and teachers; men of learning and zeal. St. Francis bade his followers show, by the example of a pure, simple, cheerful, and contented life and charitable acts, what the true followers of Christ should be. Hence his followers<sup>1</sup>—the Grey Friars—were to be like the Apostles, unlearned men, without property, living in poverty amongst the poor, healing the sick and succouring the wretched. For many years both Black Friars and Grey Friars did an enormous amount of good, the Franciscans especially being real benefactors of the poor. Before long the Grey Friars also became in part, like the Dominicans, a learned order, and for more than a century the Friars supplied Europe with most of its leaders of thought and learning, such as Thomas Aquinas and Roger Bacon. Then both sets of friars began to accumulate wealth, not for themselves, but for their orders. Thus they tended to desert the habitations of the poor, going instead among the well-to-do, or to the universities, where they became great scholars, but no longer teachers of what they had first been sent to teach, the simple message of Christ. And those who remained scattered over the country were disliked because, being an order founded by a papal decree, they were obedient only to the Pope; they were not obliged to obey the English bishops; they often interfered between the parish priest and his flock; they intercepted a great deal of charity for their own order; and as there were occasional black sheep among them, as among all ranks of men, the orders got a bad name. Perhaps jealousy of their popularity and success will account for some of the abuse, but no doubt some of the complaints were well founded.

All these things helped to rouse a feeling of hostility, and, to make matters worse, the popes themselves had at this time fallen on evil days. A pope who was a Frenchman decided to reside not in Rome but at Avignon in France; his successors followed his example, and so the popes fell much into the power of the kings of France. Englishmen hated France, with which they were carrying on a

The popes at Avignon; "the Babylonian captivity", 1309-78.

<sup>1</sup> St. Francis had no wish to found an order. This was done after his death.



prolonged war, and included in their dislike popes who appeared to be French popes. And some of the Avignon popes were men of no exalted aims, more interested in the getting of money than they should have been. They strove to find rich posts for their friends; they reserved the right of appointing to all benefices left vacant by any appointment they made, a claim which enormously extended their patronage; and as the popes received "annates" or firstfruits from every benefice to which a churchman was preferred, they arranged their preferments so as to get as much in annates as they could; they often granted "provisions", preferments made in advance, before the holder of an office was dead. Incessant disputes about elections all led to appeals to the courts at Avignon, and much money was gathered over these suits. Clement VI, who particularly distinguished himself by gathering money in this way, remarked with a cynical laugh that none of his predecessors had known how to be popes.

\*These usurpations of the popes did not go entirely unchecked. In 1351 the statute of *Provisors* was passed, which rendered persons who accepted papal provisions liable to imprisonment, and declared that all appointments to which the Pope nominated should pass for that turn to the king. This was followed, in 1353, by the statute of *Præmunire*, which forbade appeals<sup>1</sup> being made to foreign courts, and in 1393 the statute was repeated, in a more strict form, by mentioning that the getting of processes, excommunications, and bulls from Rome<sup>2</sup> would incur the penalties of *præmunire*, i.e. forfeiture of goods and imprisonment at the king's pleasure. These acts were strong enough, but they were not often enforced. The truth was that generally Pope and king could arrange to make and approve such appointments as would suit them both. They had more to gain by being on good terms than by quarrelling. Now and again when the king was displeased, these statutes would be enforced; normally they were allowed to be idle. Between the intrusions of kings and popes, however, the Church suffered grievously; the rights of chapters were everywhere overridden; and private patrons looked ruefully

Legislation  
against papal  
claims. Pro-  
visions and  
Præmunire.

<sup>1</sup> In matters of which the cognizance properly belonged to the King's Court.

<sup>2</sup> Whither the popes had returned in 1378.



on the day when Pontius Pilate and Herod made friends against them.

The latter part of Edward III's reign was, as we see, one of those periods when king and Pope were not friendly. Still worse days were in store for the papacy. In 1378 it had returned to Rome, but the Pope who was chosen, <sup>The Great Schism, 1378.</sup> Urban VI, proved so violent and insulting to his cardinals that a number of them seceded from him and set up an anti-Pope, Clement VII. Europe was immediately divided into two camps, one supporting the Roman Pope, the other the Avignonese. Each Pope denounced the other as a schismatic; it was not long before pious men, witnessing this indecent contest, began to think that the fault lay with the papacy itself. This opinion was strengthened by the increasing taxation which fell on the Church. If one pope and his papal court were a financial burden to Europe at the best of times, it was doubly a burden to have to support two. Each of the popes busied himself in declaring the other to be anti-Christ, and Europe felt that they were in all probability both right.

Thus when seventy years of "Babylonish captivity" (such was the name given to the period during which the popes lived at Avignon) had ended, only to give place to the "Great Schism" and the scandal of two popes at once, it was certain that there would be many led to criticize and condemn the papacy altogether; of this critical spirit Wyclif is the type.

Wyclif was a Yorkshireman who had gone to Oxford, where he had become master of Balliol College. He looked at matters from a historical point of view. The faults of the Church, he said, came in the main from its pursuit of wealth and power on earth; if it had remained true to the poverty and simplicity of the apostles none of the abuses would have occurred. Thus he found nothing in the Bible to justify the payments made to the Pope, called annates and firstfruits, or to excuse the holding of more than one benefice at once (pluralities), or to defend the easy and careless lives which were led alike by many churchmen and many friars. These opinions were popular. Wyclif was employed to draw up an answer disputing the Pope's demands for money, and he was used by John of Gaunt in his



political schemes. The end of Edward III's reign saw every thing going awry: failure in France, corruption and jobbery at home, heavy taxes and great want. The Black Prince lay dying, and his brother, John of Gaunt, was the next most important person in the kingdom. He gained a sort of popularity by abusing the Government and promising reforms. He strove to turn out the clerical party, headed by William of Wykeham, who held all the chief posts. For a time he succeeded, but his government proved worse than the one it replaced.

In 1376 the clerics rallied under the leadership of the Black Prince, and the "Good Parliament" seriously tried to mend things. Two of John of Gaunt's friends were impeached and dismissed, and some of the lesser rogues punished. But the work of the Good Parliament fell when the Black Prince died. No man ever had a more bitter end. The greatest general of the age, the type of chivalry, respected and loved by all who knew him, he saw all going wrong, and was himself powerless to set it right. Broken down by a long and painful sickness, he died; his father, grown senile and decrepit, soon followed him to the grave. So faded the glory of the later Plantagenets.

Wyclif proved a ready weapon in John of Gaunt's hand, and John of Gaunt sheltered him from the rage of the clerical party.

When Wyclif was summoned to St. Paul's to be tried for <sup>1377.</sup> what he had written, the Duke stood beside him to defend him; when Courtenay, Bishop of London, declared that Wyclif was little better than a heretic, the Duke threatened to drag Courtenay from the church by the hair of his head. A riot began; the citizens of London rushed in to defend their bishop; and Wyclif nearly lost his life. Brawling and abuse would not mend matters. Wyclif himself took no part in it. Indeed he had no sympathy with John of Gaunt, but as a scholar and reformer he tried to spread his ideas by practical means. He founded an order of preachers, "the Poor Priests", to teach his ideas among the people. He also directly appealed to the people himself by his tracts, which he wrote, not in Latin, the language hitherto used for all religious discussion, but in homely, plain, forcible English, which all could understand. We



shall find Luther also discarding the priestly Latin in favour of his native German when he too begins his quarrel with the Roman Church. Finally, Wyclif anticipated Luther by causing the whole Bible to be translated from the Latin into English, so that it should no longer be the property of scholars, but open to all to read for themselves, or aloud to their friends who were too ignorant to read. Translation of the Bible.

Some of this work might seem offensive at Rome, but it was applauded in England. Wyclif, however, could not rest here. From attacking the practice of the churchmen, he went on to search deeper. His teaching, in his phrase, "Dominion is founded on grace", was taken to mean that it was lawful to withdraw obedience from those who were sinful, and especially from the unworthy popes; and when he went still further and attacked the Roman doctrine of transubstantiation, he began to lose the support that had hitherto been given him. John of Gaunt hurried to Oxford to bid him be silent. The University itself, till then proud of him, found itself forced to abandon him. The party of the friars, backed by the king and Archbishop Courtenay, and aided by the Pope, proved too strong. Wyclif had to leave Oxford; but even so, though his opinions were declared heretical, his enemies dared not make him a martyr. He died peacefully in his parish at Lutterworth. Wyclif's "heretical" opinions.

Part of Wyclif's work was before its time. The bulk of Englishmen agreed to blame the wealth and neglect of some churchmen, but they had no mind to cast off the Church. A reform in the government of the church was popular: a change in doctrine was not. We shall see even in Henry VIII's day how slowly and unwillingly England changed its belief. Victory of the clerical party.

Yet as a teacher and a reformer Wyclif found many followers. Everyone that was in distress, and everyone that was in debt, and everyone that was discontented gathered themselves unto him, and in the distress following the Peasant Revolt and King Richard's minority, these were many. It was said that if you saw five men talking together three of them were Lollards. Not all the Lollards held Wyclif's heretical opinions, but they were enough to rouse the Church to Persecution of the Lollards.



action. Richard himself was no friend of the Lollards. He bade his officers help the Bishops: he ordered Wyclif's works to be destroyed: he issued an ordinance against the "Poor Priests": and on the tomb prepared for him he placed the words "he overthrew the heretics and laid their friends low". Still more vigorous was Henry IV. He won the throne by the aid of the Church, and especially of Archbishop Arundel, and he rewarded his Church supporters by a persecution of Lollards. In 1401 Parliament prepared the Statute "De Haeretico Comburendo", but before it was law William Sawtré was burnt. A few others followed. There were not however many martyrs. More Lollards were ready to abjure than to suffer.

Yet in spite of the persecution the Lollards were still numerous enough to threaten a rebellion in Henry V's reign. The leader was Sir John Oldcastle, in right of his wife Lord Cobham, a soldier who had fought well in Henry IV's wars against the Welsh. In consequence of his Lollard opinions he was arrested and sentenced to be burnt, but he escaped. A plot was formed for a great mass of Lollards to meet in St. Giles's fields, and to seize the king. The plot was discovered, and the king, by closing the gates of London and sending a body of horse to the meeting-place, prevented an outbreak. Oldcastle was at last recaptured, and burnt as a heretic. After this we hear little more of the Lollards, although in a few villages Lollardry lingered on till the time of the Reformation.

The movement was on the whole a failure, because the Lollards had nothing definite to propose. They were united in complaining about the wealth and luxury of great churchmen, but in little else. Some followed Wyclif's later opinions, and became actually heretics: that is to say, they denied some of the teachings of the Church, and wanted a change in doctrine. But the people at large had not the least wish for this; they regarded it as going much too far. In two points, however, Wyclif's life is memorable. To him and his followers we owe our first complete Bible in English, and he also taught the right of all, clergy and laity alike, to form their ideas of conduct on what they found in the Bible, without being obliged to follow blindly what they were told to believe.



## XX. Lancaster and York

### I. Outlines

The Wars of the Roses were a series of struggles for the Crown between the descendants of Edward III. The Lancastrian kings were descended from the third son, John of Gaunt. The Yorkists drew their claim from a union of the line of the second and fourth sons, Lionel of Clarence and Edward of York. The wars ended with the marriage of the heiress of the Yorkists with a remote descendant of John of Gaunt, Henry Tudor. Looked at in this light the Wars of the Roses begin with the first battle of St. Albans in 1455, when Richard Duke of York defeated Henry VI, and end with the battle of Bosworth in 1485, where Richard III was left dead on the field, and Henry VII reigned in his stead. This is a period of thirty years.

Outlines:  
 the struggle  
 between  
 Lancaster  
 and York.

Yet, though these thirty years cover the most acute phase of the struggle, if we look into it more closely, they are, after all, only a part of the tragedy, the third act in which the plot ripens into catastrophe. The beginnings of the tragedy lie much farther back. The action develops slowly; foreshadows what is going to happen; is suspended for a time by other circumstances; and only finally reaches its climax in 1455. Yet the climax was no surprise: on the contrary, it was inevitable and obvious.

History accustoms us to think that the trouble was due to the ambition of the House of York which made an unjustifiable attack upon the Lancastrian Henry VI. We are apt to forget that the Yorkists were only following the example which the Lancastrians had set. Henry of Bolingbroke had rebelled against his cousin Richard II, had seized his throne, and had made away with him. He was astute enough to cloke his violence by a show of care for the constitution. Richard was deposed as a tyrant: Henry IV accepted the throne as being the choice of Parliament. All this bears a legal look, but we must remember that Parliament

The roots of  
 the trouble:  
 the usurper,  
 Henry IV.



in those days had little strength of its own. It had been swayed one way by the Black Prince, another by John of Gaunt. It had been "Merciless" for Thomas of Woodstock and servile to Richard II. Being rather a weapon in the hands of the strong than a force in itself, Henry IV wielded it to hew down his cousin. He was too powerful and successful to be openly called a traitor. His treason had prospered—"For when it prospers folks don't call it treason"—yet none the less the plain fact was that the Lancastrian had usurped the throne from the Plantagenet. Even when Richard II was dead, the next heir was not Lancaster, but March, the descendant of the second son Clarence. In the view of constitutional historians the throne of England is not hereditary but elective. Doubtless Parliament, like Joseph, could set Ephraim before Manasseh, could prefer Lancaster to March. None the less the people were apt to murmur, and talk of birthright.

If we take this view, the Wars of the Roses are seen on a wider scale. We shall include the struggle which Henry IV fought with the allied forces of the houses of Percy, Mortimer, and Glendower. The battle-fields of Shrewsbury, and Bramham Moor are of the same character as St. Albans and Bloreheath.

The Wars of the Roses on a wider scale. Radcot Bridge, 1386, till Stoke, 1487.

We may go farther back, and find the beginning of the series at Radcot Bridge in Richard II's reign, where Gloucester, Henry of Lancaster, and the "Appellants" were too strong for the King; and following the same plan we shall find the last at Stoke, where the Crown proved too strong for Simnel and his Yorkist friends. The date of the former is 1386, of the latter 1487. Here then is another "Hundred Years' War" waged at

home instead of France, resembling its more famous namesake in having long periods of quiescence mingled with its periods of eruption, yet throughout bearing a constant character; and its goal a throne. Only instead of national ambition aiming at the throne of France, we have family ambition aiming at the throne of England.\*

We have already observed in the time of King Stephen in England, and after the death of Alexander III in Scotland, the troubles which came when there was a disputed succession

The Hundred Years' Civil War.



owing to the lack of direct royal descendants. The Wars of the Roses sprang from a cause similar, yet different—a succession disputed among too many royal descendants. A king might have no sons: he might on the other hand have too many: either fate might prove a curse to the country. The first indeed was a curse absolute; trouble was inevitable. The second only a curse contingent; whether trouble came of it or not would depend on what became of the superabundance of children. Still, the danger was always there: we have seen how the younger Henry, Geoffrey, Richard, and John poisoned Henry II's later days by their quarrels with him and each other, after he had attempted to give them each dominions of their own. Fortunately only two of them survived him.

Disputed  
succession:  
no heir.

A large family confronted a king with the task of settling his children in marriage. To marry off a number of sons to foreign princesses and so extend alliances was no doubt the ideal course, but it was not always easy to find matches for them. To marry off daughters to foreign princes was equally satisfactory, but it was always expensive: dowries had to be provided. On the contrary, to marry daughters and sons at home to nobles and noble heiresses was easy. Most noble families were glad of such royal alliances, even if the dowry were small. The policy was cheap—and bad. It was a simple way into a difficulty. It converted the noble families into semi-royal families; it was sowing a crop of royal cousins who, living in England, and being in possession of great estates, were certain to become embarrassing to the Crown. For example, grandchildren of Edward I were connected with the houses of Despensers (Gloucester), de Burgh, Courtenay, Bohun, Segrave, and Holland; and grandchildren of Edward III were allied with the houses of Mortimer, Holland, Despenser, Bohun, and Neville.

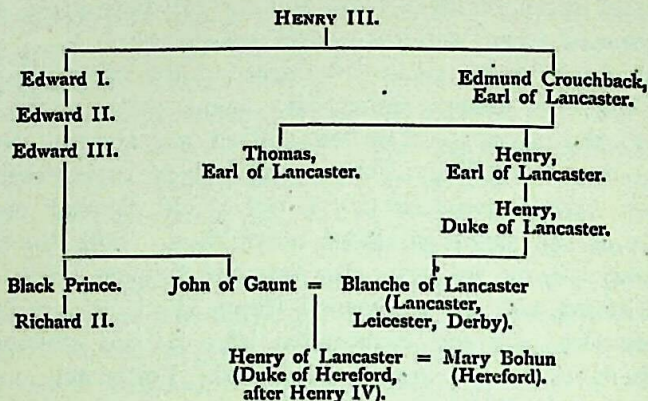
Too many  
claimants.  
The semi-  
royal  
families.

The policy of bestowing great earldoms on royal princes, which was begun by Henry III, and continued by Edward I and Edward III, finds its best illustration in the position of John of Gaunt, and his son Henry of Lancaster. John of Gaunt was Edward III's third son. He

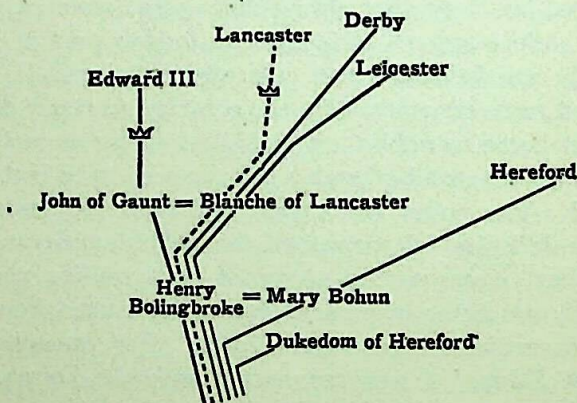
John of Gaunt,  
Duke of Lancaster.



married Blanche of Lancaster, who, being herself of royal blood.<sup>1</sup>



brought him the possessions of Lancaster, and the earldoms of Derby and Leicester. The son of this match, Henry, married Mary Bohun, and gained half the possessions of Hereford. Thus



**Diagram to illustrate Henry of Bolingbroke's Power: "royal" on both sides, possessor of, or heir to, two Dukedoms and three Earldoms**

we see how formidable this Henry was to his cousin Richard II. Besides being of royal blood on both sides of his house, he was master of four great earldoms. Richard had made him Duke of Hereford even while his father, the Duke of Lancaster, was still alive.

<sup>1</sup> She was Henry III's great-great-granddaughter.



## 2. The First Act of the Tragedy: The Overthrow of the Legitimate Line by the House of Lancaster

The story of the reign of Richard II is the story of a prolonged struggle between the party of the king and the party of Lancaster. At first, John of Gaunt was master of England; but the Peasant Revolt seems to have terrified him. He realized that he was bitterly hated. After 1381 he retired from taking an active share in politics, and from 1386 till 1389 was busy in pushing a claim to the throne of Castile. He left, however, his policy to his son Henry (then Earl of Derby), who, with Thomas of Gloucester<sup>1</sup> and the Earls of Warwick, Nottingham, and Arundel, continued to harass King Richard. They acted through Parliament, urging on that body to try to check the king's spending of money by demanding a commission to regulate the royal household. Parliament was ready enough to comply, since taxation had been notoriously heavy, a fresh poll tax had been levied, and much money was being spent and no account of it given. The quarrel came to a head in 1386, when Parliament demanded that Richard's friends—de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk, and de Vere, Earl of Oxford—should be dismissed. De la Pole received his dismissal, but de Vere and the king's friends took up arms: however, in the battle of Radcot Bridge de Vere was defeated, and Richard had to give way. The methods of the Wars of the Roses were foreshadowed when Gloucester, Derby, Warwick, Nottingham, and Arundel, styling themselves the "Appellants", accused of treason the king's fallen friends. All save one were condemned to death by the Parliament which won for itself the name of "Merciless", and five were beheaded.

**Triumph of the Appellants over the king's friends at Radcot Bridge, 1386.**

The remainder of the reign saw Richard striving to work out his revenge on the Appellants. In 1389 he declared to Gloucester that he was of age enough to manage his own kingdom.

<sup>1</sup> Richard II's youngest uncle.



For eight years he ruled quietly; but in 1397 he caused Gloucester, Warwick, and Arundel to be seized on a charge of treason. Parliament, overawed by a body of Cheshire archers standing armed in Westminster Palace Yard, declared them guilty. Gloucester died or was murdered in prison, Warwick imprisoned, Arundel executed, and Arundel's brother the Archbishop banished.

The king's  
revenge on  
Gloucester,  
Warwick,  
and Arundel.

Thus three of the five Appellants were disposed of. Derby and Nottingham remained, and for the time the king's face shone on them. They were even made dukes. Richard's position seemed to be secure, for he had extorted from Parliament a revenue for life, and had even forced that body to delegate its powers to a council of eighteen of his friends. This made Richard an absolute king. There was no reason why he should ever summon another Parliament.

Then came another change. The two new-made dukes quarrelled. Richard banished them both—Norfolk for life, Hereford for seven years,<sup>1</sup> promising the latter not to forfeit any lands or goods which might come to him during his exile. This promise he did not keep; for, needing money to equip an expedition to Ireland, he seized the Lancaster estates when Gaunt died in 1399, and, reckless of the danger, went off to Ireland. During his absence

Banishment  
of the other  
Appellants  
Hereford and  
Norfolk.

Return of  
Hereford and  
overthrow of  
King Richard.

Henry Bolingbroke landed in Yorkshire, alleging that he had come to claim the king's promise and recover the Lancaster possessions. Percy of Northumberland and all Richard's enemies joined him. Richard came back only to find his cousin supreme. The claim to the dukedom of Lancaster was enlarged to a claim to the throne. Richard was formally deposed by Parliament, and Henry IV became king.

<sup>1</sup> The change in titles of these persons is bewildering. Thomas Mowbray was Earl of Nottingham, and afterwards Duke of Norfolk. Henry of Bolingbroke (son of John of Gaunt) was Earl of Derby, then Duke of Hereford, then, on his father's death, Duke of Lancaster, and, lastly, Henry IV.



### 3. The Percy-Mortimer Alliance against the House of Lancaster

The accession of Henry IV is usually dwelt on as a landmark in our constitutional history. It is held to display again the fact that the throne of England is not hereditary but elective. It is argued that Richard II by his misgovernment had forfeited the throne; his declarations—or those that his enemies put in his mouth—that the law of England resided in his own breast, and that he alone could frame it, and that the life and lands of all his lieges lay at the mercy of his royal will, were certainly unconstitutional: accordingly his cousin, a better man than he, is put in his place. In this view Henry IV is found in a class with Alfred, Harold, William III, George I, and we may perhaps add Cromwell, the “chosen of the people”; while Richard II may be classed with Edward II, Charles I, James II, the “rejected of the people”. But though it is important to remember that Henry IV’s title was mainly Parliamentary, and that as a consequence Parliament during his reign was petted and encouraged to be precociously active beyond its real powers—in its way a turning-point in our history—yet from the point of view which we are at present taking, the accession of the Lancastrian Henry IV was merely an event long foreshadowed, only the successful ending of a long plot, only the first revolution in the constantly turning wheel of the succession. In short, it was the triumph of the Lancastrians in the party struggle. And this struggle was not merely for good government. No attempt was made to reform Richard, or to make him rule well. The prize was the Crown, and the winner took it. But the victory of this Lancastrian—who was so ardent a supporter of the constitution that he had to depose his royal cousin, and later to procure his death, all doubtless in the cause of good government—in no way altered or ended the bitterness of the party struggle. That went on as before.

The accession of Henry IV a constitutional landmark.

But also a victory of family ambition.

This fact is at once plain when we recollect that from 1399 to 1407 Henry IV was never free from rebellion. The first rising



was planned by Richard II's half-brothers, the Hollands, Earls of Kent and Huntingdon, who plotted to seize Henry as he

**Continuance of the struggle. The Hollands' plot.**

was keeping Christmas at Windsor and liberate Richard II from Pontefract. Henry got news of their design, and fled to London. The plotters

scattered to raise their retainers, but were all captured. No trial was given them; all were beheaded: and, to prevent any further rebellions with the same object, Henry caused Richard's

**Death of Richard II.**

dead body to be brought to London and displayed there. A death, in its date so extremely convenient to King Henry, could hardly be accepted as natural: the report of the chronicler that Richard was so "vexed at heart over the loss of his friends that he neither ate nor drank from that hour, and thus, as they say, it came to pass that he died" is unconvincing. Doubtless he was murdered.

Thus fell Richard II and the party of the "White Hart", but his death did not make Henry IV the nearest heir to the throne.

**The Mortimer plots.**

That right belonged to the house of Mortimer,<sup>1</sup> and accordingly we find a Mortimer deeply concerned in the next plot: and it is scarcely surprising that it should begin in Cheshire and the North Welsh border, which had been Richard II's stronghold.

Owen Glendower, a Welsh landowner, had quarrelled with his neighbour, and, as was typical of the disordered time, each

**Glendower.**

tried to make good his claims by force, to settle by arms what would now be settled by law. The fighting spread into a national rising. Henry himself led an army into North Wales, and, as usual, could do nothing against Welsh mountains and Welsh weather. He withdrew, and left the task of repelling Glendower to Henry Percy (Hotspur) and Sir Edmund Mortimer. Mortimer tried to surprise his enemy, but his force was cut to pieces and himself made prisoner.

Now, though this Edmund Mortimer was not the Mortimer next to the succession, he was closely related to him. He was uncle to Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March, the lineal heir to the Crown. He was, moreover, brother-in-law to Henry Percy, who had married Elizabeth Mortimer. Consequently the Percies

<sup>1</sup> See table on p. 214.



began to urge the king to ransom Mortimer, and the king had no mind to comply: he did not wish to help the Welsh with money; he thought it well to have Mortimer safely shut up and out of the way; and he had no pity for the prisoner, since tales were going round that he had got himself captured on purpose, and that he was treasonably friendly to Glendower.

Thus the Percies and the king grew estranged, all the more that, while Henry's campaign against the Welsh had proved a dolorous failure, the Percies had won a brilliant success against the Scots. Hotspur had defeated 10,000 Scots under Douglas and Murdoch Stewart at Homildon Hill; the old supremacy of the archers had been illustrated again; many prisoners had been taken, including both Scottish leaders. This was, indeed, a windfall. The Percies were an extremely powerful family, and an extremely greedy one. Mattathias, Earl of Northumberland, the father, Henry Hotspur, the son, and Thomas Percy, Earl of Worcester, the brother, held between them most of the chief offices in England. The list is too long to recite here. Suddenly their hopes of making a large profit by ransoming their prisoners were dashed by a royal command that they were not to part with them. They had already been pressing the king to pay the debts which they alleged that he owed, and to ransom their kinsman Mortimer: now, provoked beyond bearing by his attempts to wrest from them what they regarded as the due reward of their valour, they rebelled.

Quarrel with  
the Percies,  
who join the  
Mortimer cause.

Homildon  
Hill, 1402.

The result was the formation of a grand alliance against Henry. The Percies headed it; their prisoner, the Earl of Douglas, brought in the Scots; Mortimer and Owen Glendower, of course, joined against the common enemy; the alliance was cemented, as usual, by a marriage. Mortimer wedded Owen's daughter. Their purpose was thus stated by Mortimer, "to restore to King Richard the crown if he be alive; and if not, my honoured nephew who is right heir to the crown of England".

The issue was fought out at Shrewsbury, the sternest battle seen in England since the days of Hastings. Some seven thousand men fell; Hotspur was killed making a last desperate charge. Thomas Percy, Earl of Worcester, was beheaded two



days later. Henry triumphed; the conspiracy was shattered; the Earl of Northumberland submitted to the king, and Henry treated him with more generosity than he deserved. He remembered his old friendship, and forgot his treason: in six months he set "his trusty Mattathias" free, and gave back his lands. The "trusty

Mattathias" made an ill use of this clemency. In 1405 he embarked on another conspiracy with Mowbray, Earl of Nottingham, and Scrope, Archbishop of York. Eight thousand men gathered in Yorkshire, and Scrope put forth a series of accusations against the king, holding him guilty of winning the Crown by treachery, conniving at Richard's murder, putting men to death without trial, and ruining his subjects by illegal taxation. There was enough truth in these charges to make them intolerable, even if Scrope and his comrades were not actually plotting to dethrone Henry. The rebels dispersed on the belief that the leaders on both sides had come to terms. Nottingham and the Archbishop were seized and beheaded. To put an Archbishop to death for treason was a strong step. Men darkly hinted that Henry's subsequent illness was but the judgment of heaven on his impiety.

Once again the prime mover, the "trusty" Earl, escaped. He had been too prudent to be at Shrewsbury, and too cautious to venture, like Scrope, into the enemy's clutches. For a time he made the round of Henry's foes, visiting Scotland, Wales, Flanders, and France.

At length he threw away prudence, and tried one more stroke in Yorkshire. Sir Thomas Rokeby, with the local levies, met him at Bramham Moor. His force was routed, and he was killed on the field. And with this fight Henry's troubles came practically to an end.

So the first act in the drama of Lancaster and York—the Hundred Years' Civil War—occupied the reign of Richard II.

It ended with the overthrow of the eldest line by the line of Lancaster. The second act ended at Bramham Moor: it displays a struggle against the usurping Lancastrian carried on by an ambitious family which made a catspaw of the Mortimer title; and

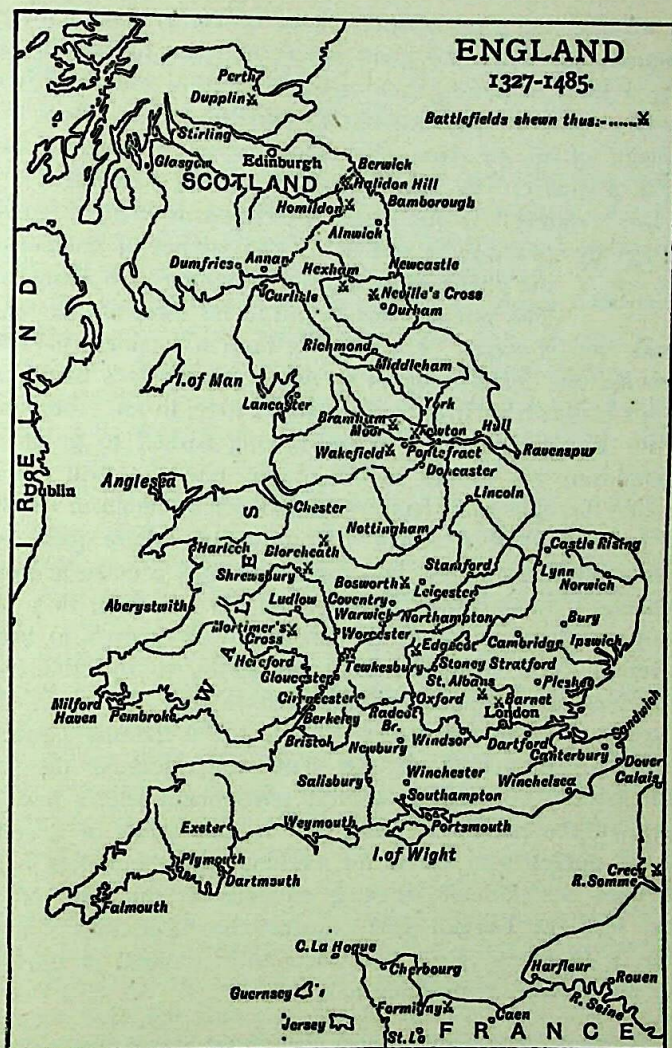
Battle of  
Shrewsbury,  
1403. Victory  
of the king.

Renewed plots by  
Northumberland,  
Mowbray, and  
Scrope, 1405.

Battle of Bram-  
ham Moor.  
Death of North-  
umberland, 1408.

Victory of the  
house of Lan-  
caster over the  
Percy-Mortimer  
alliance.





it closed with the triumph of the Lancastrian. But it is impossible not to recognize the true features of the Wars of the Roses proper, revealed in this reign. We have rebellion, treachery, murder, beheading without

Features of the Wars of the Roses.



trial; we have the great northern house of Percy, playing the part afterwards played by the great northern house of Neville, first raising a king to power, then trying to control him, and finally destroying itself in the attempt to overthrow him. And, most significant of all, we have the ready appeal to arms in order to back a quarrel: we have "livery" and the "retainer".

The "retainer" is sometimes described as being "feudal". This, strictly speaking, he was not. The essence of feudalism is the giving of service on condition of holding land. The "retainer".

The retainer was bound to his lord, not by tenure of land, but by wages. He was not born a retainer; he chose to become one. He accepted service at his master's hands, and wore his badge, his "livery". Retainers were, in fact, the substitute for a regular army. When a king wished to go to war he employed his nobles to bring men into the field: in old days they brought their feudal tenants: when feudalism decayed they brought their retainers. Unfortunately these men, who proved a blessing at Crécy and Agincourt, were a curse at home. "Retained" by their masters after the war was over, they were employed in time of peace to pursue private quarrels at home, to overawe local tribunals, to terrify juries, to rob the barns and stables of an opponent, and even to defy the king. The disaster to the country lay in this, that the fighting power of the age rested neither in the class which formed the bulk of the nation, nor in the central government which had the interest of the nation at heart, but in the hands of a selfish class of nobles who cared for nothing but themselves. The days were not far off when a struggle on the part of the "Bear with the Ragged Staff" against the "Portcullis"<sup>1</sup> would not be a harmless Æsop-like affair with a moral at the end, but a stern strife, convulsing a kingdom.

<sup>1</sup> The badges of Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, and Edmund Beaufort, Duke of Somerset. The "Portcullis" was afterwards borne by Henry VII, and is displayed all over King's College Chapel.



#### 4. The Third Act of the Tragedy: The Wars of the Roses

Between Bramham Moor in 1408 and the first battle of St. Albans in 1455 there was no actual outbreak of civil war.

Yet the fire was smothered and not quenched—  
down below the surface the embers of discontent  
with the house of Lancaster were still glowing.

Smothered fires.  
Richard of Cam-  
bridge's plot,  
1415.

On the eve of sailing for his campaign of Agincourt, Henry V found out a conspiracy against him. The chief plotters, Richard of Cambridge, and Lord Scrope and Sir Thomas Grey, paid forfeit with their lives. Their mere names, however, tell us a good deal. Scrope was a relative of the archbishop whom Henry IV had beheaded; Richard of Cambridge was even more notorious, being a son of Edmund, Duke of York, and the husband of Anne Mortimer, the heiress of the line of Clarence and Mortimer.<sup>1</sup> Thus he represented the legitimate line against the usurping Lancastrian. He died on the scaffold and left his claims to his son. We shall hear much of this son. He is that Richard, Duke of York, who was to win St. Albans and to die at Wakefield.

For the time the nation was too much occupied with the successes of the French war to care about events at home.

Herein lay at once the strength and the weakness  
of Henry V as a statesman. He was a strong

Distraction of  
the French war.

and popular king, coming, as it seemed, a gift from heaven at the hour of need. Yet his policy only postponed the evils of the time: it did not cure them. Henry looked backward, and not forward. He returned to the methods of Edward III, French war: the true cure lay in the methods afterwards employed by Henry VII. Henry V did not remedy the evils of feudalism: he only cloaked them over. Instead of destroying the retainers and curbing the nobles, he employed them against a foreign enemy. Employing them only meant increasing their dangerous fighting power. He neglected his opportunity, and

<sup>1</sup> See table, p. 214.



Henry VI paid for the neglect. The father sowed the wind and the son reaped the whirlwind.

Until the appearance of the Maid of Orleans in 1428 the system of Henry V went on with scarcely a check: even till the French terms were foolishly rejected at Arras, and Burgundy fell away from the English alliance, the English cause was fairly prosperous. Then came eighteen years of disaster with the usual result. All political parties are ready to take credit: none will admit failure. The steady round of taxes and lost battles, and more taxes and more lost battles, speedily destroyed the reputation of the Government. Had Parliament been an effective body, the unsatisfactory ministers would have been ejected from power in a peaceable manner. But in the fifteenth century Parliament was not effective. It could complain querulously, but it could not act. The only way to overthrow those in power at the court was by intrigue, or, still worse, by rebellion.

For the first twenty-five years of his reign Henry VI was chiefly guided by his uncles, and his cousins the Beauforts.

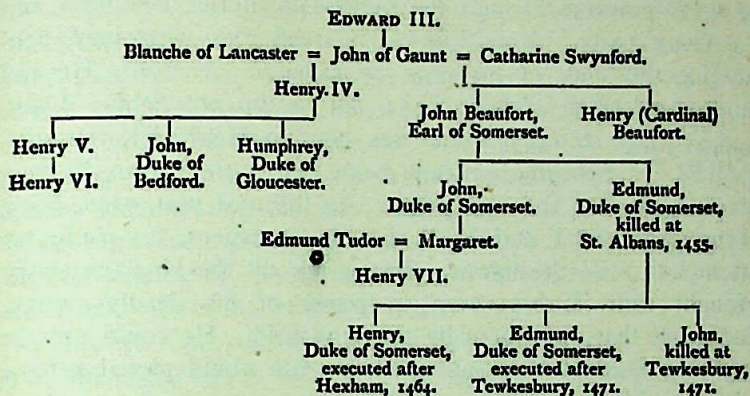
**The Beauforts.** John, Duke of Bedford, was a wise and patriotic statesman, but the care of French affairs gave him no time to mend matters in England. This left the field clear to his brother, Gloucester—that “fair brother Humphrey” whom we have seen Henry V distrust. Gloucester was greedy and self-seeking, and involved himself in bitter quarrels with the Beauforts. This Beaufort family was descended from John of Gaunt’s illegitimate marriage with Catharine Swynford.<sup>1</sup> One of them, Henry Beaufort, became Bishop of Winchester and Cardinal: others held, in succession, the title of Earl, and afterwards Duke, of Somerset. All were Lancastrian, as, indeed, was Humphrey of Gloucester, but the two parties were bitterly hostile, struggling for power in the Council of Regency; so far, there was no serious Yorkist party to cause the Lancastrian factions to unite.

In 1445 Henry married his French wife, Margaret of Anjou. In 1447 Gloucester was imprisoned on a charge of treason, and died in prison; no doubt he was murdered. Since Henry VI

<sup>1</sup> See table, p. 211.



## "THE HOUSES OF LANCASTER AND BEAUFORT"



had as yet no son, Richard, Duke of York, son of Richard of Cambridge, became heir to the throne. So far, York had shown no sign of disloyalty. For more than ten years he had held a command in France, and had made a reputation as a stout soldier. The Beauforts, however, grew jealous of him. He was removed from his command, and sent into practical banishment as King's Lieutenant in Ireland. Edmund Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, superseded him in Normandy (1448).

Then came the hour of the last agony in France. The patched-up truce was foolishly broken. One defeat followed another: failure abroad was visited on the heads of unpopular ministers at home by a series of murders. In 1450 the Bishop of Chichester was murdered. Suffolk, who had had the moral courage to negotiate the peace with France—the one possible course a wise man could take—was banished, intercepted on his way, and his head hewn off, with a rusty sword for axe and a boat's gunwale for block. In June Jack Cade, pretending that his name was Mortimer, led the Kentish men in rebellion, and occupied London, murdering there, the Bishop of Salisbury and Lord Saye, the Treasurer. The idea that York was at the bottom of Cade's rebellion was fostered when he came back suddenly from Ireland just as Somerset returned from Nor-

Marriage of  
Henry VI, 1445.  
York, heir to  
the throne.

Cade's insurrection.



mandy. A Yorkist party grew in strength, posing as the friends of good government, and the opponents of the Beauforts and the Court party. York himself behaved with what may, considering the spirit of his time, be called moderation. He did indeed collect an army in 1452, but he did not fight. When, in 1453, a son was born to Henry VI, thus displacing him from being heir to the Crown, he gave his allegiance to the new prince. In the next year, when King Henry went mad and York was chosen regent, he made no attempt to seize the throne. It was not till the king's recovery brought with it the return to power of his deadly enemy, Somerset, that York actually took the field. He could not do anything else; had he submitted, his fate would probably have been the block.

The Wars of the Roses proper, beginning in 1455, fall into four subdivisions. The first was a struggle for the regency, and ended in the triumph of York over Somerset at St. Albans. The second period began in 1459 with the attempt of Queen Margaret to overthrow the Yorkists, and ended with the accession of Edward IV, the Yorkist triumph at Towton (1461), and the beating down of the Lancastrian resistance in the north. The third was marked by the effort of the Nevilles to master the line of York: this failed at Barnet and Tewkesbury (1471). The last relates how Richard III, having alienated a great part of his own supporters, fell victim to an alliance of enemies at Bosworth (1485).

### § 1. *York against Somerset*

The first campaign is simple and may be speedily dismissed. It was not so much York against Lancaster as York against Somerset. The object was not yet to seize the Crown: it was a struggle for the regency—the reins of power but not the name. York's army, moving on London, found the king's forces holding St. Albans. An attack was made on the little town. The deciding point in the fight came when Warwick and his men, making their way through the houses in St. Peter's Street, burst into the

1. York against Somerset.  
Battle of St. Albans, 1455.

Somerset. The object was not yet to seize the Crown: it was a struggle for the regency—the reins of power but not the name.



middle of the Lancastrians. Somerset was killed and King Henry captured. As the fruit of victory York again became Protector, and filled the great offices of State with his friends. Somerset being dead, all the blame could conveniently be put on him, and as the Yorkists were profuse in promises of better government, it might be hoped that the country would settle down.

Henry VI, gentle and pious like another Job—a simple, upright man, fearing the Lord above all, and avoiding evil—would never have provoked further trouble. But his queen, Margaret of Anjou, was fierce as her husband Margaret of Anjou. was meek. In spirit, resource, courage, resolution, and in the bad side of these qualities, ambition, guile, ferocity, mercilessness, the “she-wolf of France” was a match for any baron of the time. There was nothing of the softer sex about her. In an age full of treason and brutality Margaret was treacherous and ruthless above the rest. To cast discredit on the Yorkist lords she did not scruple to invite French marauders into England: she even advised them where they might land, sack, burn, and kill without fear of resistance. While Henry could not bear to look on the quartered remains of a traitor, perched on Cripplegate, saying, “I will not that any Christian man be so cruelly used for me”, Margaret would have agreed with Louis XI’s maxim that there was “no perfume to match the scent of a dead traitor”. After the second battle of St. Albans she bade her son Edward, then eight years old, choose what death two Yorkist prisoners should die. The boy’s answer, “Let their heads be taken off”, must have delighted his mother.

As Margaret was the mainstay of the Lancastrians, so were the Nevilles of the Yorkist side. At first sight two things are perhaps surprising about these Nevilles. To begin The Nevilles. with, the grandfather of Neville the Kingmaker, Ralph, Earl of Westmorland, was a Lancastrian; and so was his second wife, Joan Beaufort, the Kingmaker’s grandmother, being a daughter of John of Gaunt. Thus the Nevilles were of that large and dangerous class, royal cousins; but we should scarce expect to find them on the Yorkist side. Secondly, since Richard Neville, the Kingmaker’s father, was indeed only the

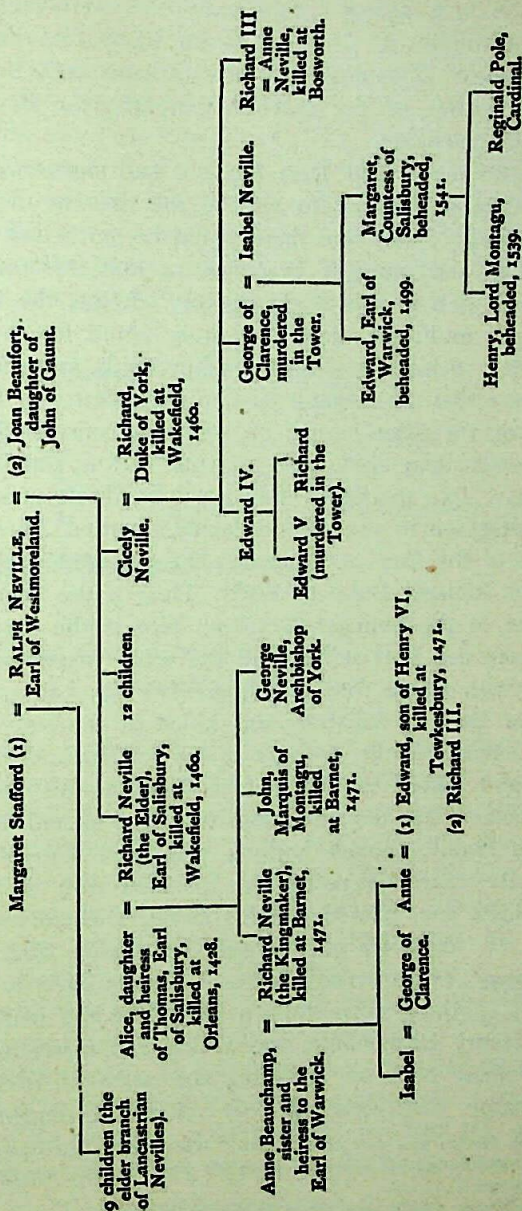






TABLE OF THE NEVILLE FAMILY

Observe the violent deaths, and especially the misfortunes of the Clarence descendants





elder son of a *second* family, and there were nine children in the first family, it does not seem likely that he will inherit wide estates. The answer which explains both the sympathies and the power of the Nevilles can be given in two words—fortunate marriages.

Ralph Neville and Joan Beaufort had fourteen children:<sup>1</sup> no inconsiderable number to add to the nine in the first family. It was hardly likely that there would be much love lost between the elder and younger branches, or that the younger branch would be rich in this world's goods. Ralph, the father of this multitude, did the best he could for them. He left to his widow his Yorkshire lands, and she in her turn took care that they should pass to her eldest son, Richard, thus depriving the elder branch of what they considered their rights.

Fortunate marriages.

But better than this, both parents had a genius for match-making. Two marriages only need be dwelt upon. Richard, the eldest son in the second family, married Alice Montacute, heiress of the Earl of Salisbury; the youngest daughter, Cicely, married Richard Duke of York. Here is the beginning of the fortunes of the younger Nevilles: here is the explanation why they take the Yorkist side, all the more eagerly since the first family with whom they had quarrelled was Lancastrian.

The Earl of Salisbury was killed at the siege of Orleans, and Richard Neville, in right of his wife, became Earl of Salisbury, and added the Montacute lands to his own Yorkshire inheritance. He too was father to four sons and five daughters, a large family, though nothing compared with Ralph's. But again the marriage policy was pursued with striking success. The eldest son, named like his father, Richard, married Anne, daughter of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick.

The Beauchamp marriage.

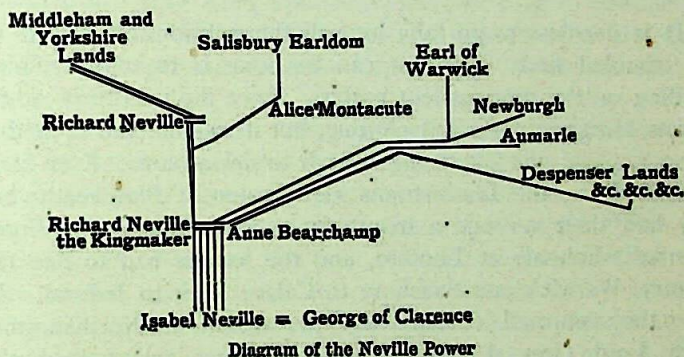
The marriage seemed scarcely likely to lead to anything more than a dowry, for the heir to the Earldom, Henry Beauchamp, was young and newly married.<sup>2</sup> But fate seemed bent on favouring the name of Richard Neville. Beauchamp died, leaving only an infant daughter; and the

<sup>1</sup> Ralph Neville was well blessed with "olive branches round about his table". A student of the Psalms will remember the words with which the next Psalm begins—*Sapientia expugnauerunt.*

<sup>2</sup> To a Neville: Cicely, sister of the Kingmaker.



daughter died; and thus Richard Neville the younger became, in right of his wife, "Earl of Warwick, Newburgh, and Aumarle, Premier Earl of England, Baron of Stanley and Hanslape, Lord of Glamorgan and Morgannoc", master of the Despenser lands in South Wales, the Beauchamp lands in Gloucestershire, Warwick, Oxfordshire and Buckingham, with scattered holdings in seventeen other counties all over the length and breadth of England. More than a hundred and fifty manors were his. By this amazing stroke of luck, the boy of twenty-two became far more powerful than his father. Yet ten years later his father's



inheritance came to him also, when Richard the elder fell at Wakefield. When we add his other relationships: that his uncles and aunts were allied in marriage to the house of Fauconbridge, Latimer, Abergavenny, Mowbray, and Stafford; that his sisters were married into the houses of Arundel, Tiptoft, Stanley, Bonville and de Vere; that even the church had one Neville Bishop of Durham, and another Bishop of Exeter;<sup>1</sup> that his uncle by marriage, Richard Duke of York, was Protector of the Realm, and ready to give any of the great offices into Neville hands, then the catalogue nears an end. It may seem a somewhat wearisome catalogue. Yet the recital of it serves a purpose if it impresses on the mind the amazing position held by Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick. One thing remains to be said, namely, that

Richard, Earl of Warwick, the Kingmaker.

<sup>1</sup> And later Archbishop of York.



the man himself had all the qualities of a leader. He was a cautious and sensible statesman, an adequate general, ambitious but not without principle, firm yet not cruel, able from the early days of manhood to use the power which lay in his hands. We shall no longer be surprised that this Neville of a younger branch is called "The Kingmaker". We might go further; we might almost call the years 1460 to 1471 the "reign of Richard Neville".

## § 2. *The Seizure of the Crown by the House of York.*

It is needless to go fully into all the politics and warfare of this troubled time. All that can be done is to outline them, dwelling on the more salient points. Since the overthrow at St. Albans Margaret never left plotting, but it was not till 1459 that she felt strong enough to risk a blow. Even then the Lancastrians were beaten at Bloreheath; but they had their revenge a month later, when the Yorkist force deserted wholesale at Ludford, and the leaders had to flee the country, Warwick and Salisbury to Calais, York to Ireland. In 1460 they returned, defeated the Lancastrians at Northampton, when Lord Grey de Ruthyn turned traitor and helped the Yorkists over the fortifications in the Lancastrian lines. Henry himself taken prisoner was the chief prize of the victory, and the Duke of York appearing in London began to set forward his claims to the throne. In the meantime Margaret and Lord Clifford were gathering fresh levies in the north. The Duke, marching north to meet them, was caught with an inferior force, defeated and killed at Wakefield. A paper crown set on his head over the gates of York was Margaret's derisive answer to his hopes of a kingdom.

Wakefield fight cleared away two fathers to make room for two abler sons. Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, left his cause to his son Edward, Earl of March. Richard Neville, Earl of Salisbury, less fortunate even than his master, for he was taken prisoner and beheaded in cold blood, gave place to Richard his son, Warwick the Kingmaker. At first the Yorkist cause seemed desperate. Margaret's army, now swollen to a huge force, rolled



southward plundering and burning. The Yorkists were scattered, Warwick struggling to cover London, Edward far away in the west, where he had been winning the battle of Mortimer's Cross. Margaret came on Warwick at St. Albans and beat him. Again treachery had much to do with the result; a Kentish squire named Lovelace went over to the Lancastrians, and left a gap in the Yorkist lines, through which the enemy passed. The Yorkists fled in confusion: next day Warwick had not above a sixth of his army with him. This crushing defeat coming on the top of Wakefield seemed fatal. The King had been once more taken prisoner—this time by his friends. Everyone expected that a few days would see Margaret in London and Henry VI on the throne again.

Second battle  
of St. Albans,  
1460.

The chance was lost. Margaret dawdled; London—accustomed to become the prize of war—was willing to yield if only it could escape being entered by the Northerners, and King Henry persuaded his wife to agree. The respite given allowed Warwick first to join Edward, and then to return at full speed to London. The Lancastrians retreated northwards, the first step in a lost cause. Years were to pass before fate would be again kind and the wasted opportunity return.

Margaret's  
failure.

Less than six weeks saw the Lancastrian cause in the dust. Edward, now acknowledged King, pursued Margaret's army northwards and encountered it at Towton. This was the sternest fight in all the battles of the Roses. The numbers on each side were about equal, but a squall of wind and snow, blowing into the Lancastrians' faces, carried the Yorkist arrows into their ranks, and prevented their return fire from reaching the enemy. Having shot away their shafts to no purpose the Lancastrians had to leave their ground and commit themselves to an attack up hill on the Yorkist lines. For hours the battle hung in the balance, till towards afternoon, a fresh Yorkist force under Norfolk coming up on the right, gradually pressed the Lancastrian left north-westwards. The result was disastrous, for to the north and west their retreat was cut off by the little river Cock, deep and sluggish, and at this

Edward IV; battle  
of Towton, 1461.



time overflowing its banks. Nothing showed where the deep water lay, and hundreds of the Lancastrians, splashing through the flood, fell in headlong and were drowned. There was little chance for those who wore armour. The last to cross did so on the piled-up bodies of their drowned comrades. Late into the afternoon the Yorkists pressed a fiery pursuit, and when night came the Lancastrian army was annihilated.

One thing would have made Towton absolutely decisive—the capture of Margaret. Margaret, however, escaped, and for the next three years kept up a desultory struggle in the north. She got help from the Scots and the French. The fighting went on round the great castles of Alnwick, Bamborough, and Dunstanborough. Warwick and his brother, John Neville, Marquis Montagu, at length captured these strongholds, and in the battles of Hedgeley Moor and Hexham shattered the last of the Lancastrians. After Hexham, Montagu enforced his victories by beheading all the Lancastrian leaders in his hands. Among them fell Henry Beaufort, Duke of Somerset.

Struggle in  
the north.  
Hexham,  
1464.

### § 3. *The Quarrel of York and Neville*

The Yorkists had now nothing to fear but themselves. Hitherto the alliance of York and Neville, united by a common foe, had proved irresistible; but, the danger over, the interests of the two drifted apart. Edward IV had won the throne; but what reward could be enough for the man who put him there? To owe too much is the strongest temptation to repay nothing. A King cannot endure the continual presence of a Kingmaker. The thought must be present to the minds of both that it is even easier to unmake than to make.

Thus the next period of the war, from 1464 to 1471, covers the alienation of the house of Neville from the house of York, sees the alienation turn into open enmity, and ends with the death of the Kingmaker and the second triumph of Edward IV—this time over a Neville-Lancaster coalition.

Breach of  
York with  
Neville.

As soon as Edward IV found the Nevilles were no longer



useful, he perceived how dangerous they were. He set himself to break free from their control, and began by delivering a snub to Warwick. He allowed him to busy himself over negotiating a marriage for him with a French princess.<sup>1</sup> Edward must have smiled at the diligence Warwick displayed, since he was, as a matter of fact, already secretly married to a lady of no high rank, Elizabeth Woodville, widow of a Lancastrian knight, Sir John Grey. When the news was at last revealed by the king, Warwick was left to swallow the snub as best he could. This was not all. Edward followed it up by promoting all his wife's relations. The Woodvilles were to rise as a counterpoise to the Nevilles, and by the same means—royal favours and politic marriages. In 1467 the breach became open. George Neville, the Archbishop of York, was dismissed from the Chancellorship, and Lord Rivers, the queen's father, put in his place; then the king persuaded the Duchess of Exeter to break off her intended match with Warwick's nephew, and marry instead John Grey, the queen's eldest son. To complete Warwick's disgrace, the king sent him oversea to prepare a match for his sister, Margaret of York, with a French prince, and, directly he was out of the way, betrothed her to the son of the chief enemy of France, the Duke of Burgundy.

The Woodville marriage.

Once more we observe how completely the politics of the time are marriage politics. Each side strives by success in marriage to win wealth and estates, because estates and wealth mean retainers and military power; and in days when men of noble family so often died in battle or on the scaffold<sup>2</sup> there were plenty of marriageable and wealthy widows. No match is too sordid, so long as it be profitable; witness John Woodville, aged twenty-two, marrying the Dowager Duchess of Norfolk, old enough to be his grandmother; witness, again, Warwick's counterstroke to Edward's exalting of the Woodvilles. He tempted George of Clarence, the king's brother, into prospective treason by offering the hand of his own daughter, heiress of his estates, Isabel Neville; and Clarence accepted the bribe.

Marriage politics. Clarence-Neville.

<sup>1</sup> Bona of Savoy, sister to Louis XI's queen.

<sup>2</sup> See the Neville table: and also the Beaufort table.



Affairs were once more reaching a point when the only decision could be by the sword. Lancastrian partisans again appeared in the country. In 1469 the whole of South Yorkshire burst into rebellion under Sir John Conyers, a relation of Warwick's by marriage. At Edward's summons Warwick himself came over from Calais, with George Neville and the Duke of Clarence (now his son-in-law) with him. Far from helping Edward, War-

Edgecote Field.  
Capture of  
King Edward.

wick raised a force against him. Some of the king's soldiers went over to the Neville side; the force under Lord Herbert, who remained loyal, was shattered by Conyers at Edgecote. Edward himself was captured at night by George Neville and a party of Warwick's men-at-arms.

Warwick had the game in his hands, but was just too honourable to win it. He might have put Edward to death, and once more played the part of a kingmaker, this time for his son-in-law, Clarence's, benefit. Yet, though doubtless Edward would have had no hesitation in ordering Warwick's head off, Warwick was more scrupulous. He contented himself with taking vengeance on the Woodvilles, two of whom he caused to be beheaded; from the king he exacted no more than promises. Probably, over-confident of his own strength, he thought that he had given Edward a sufficient lesson. In a sense he had, yet scarcely what he intended. He had wished to discipline a young man, but he had created an implacable enemy, all the more dangerous that the pupil had taken the lesson with a smiling countenance.

Then came a year of revolutions. In March, 1470, Edward collected forces to subdue a rising in Lincolnshire, and turning suddenly on Warwick and Clarence, forced them to flee overseas. In France they found the scattered remains of the Lancastrian party, with the dauntless Margaret of Anjou at their head. Strange were the privations they had gone through, the young prince "begging from house to house", the queen, without money, baggage, or gowns, sharing a herring for the food of herself and her son, and reduced to borrow at mass from a Scottish archer, who, "rather loath, drew a Scots groat from his purse, and lent it to her". Louis XI saw his chance of striking a counter-blow at

Flight of  
the Nevilles.  
Alliance with  
Margaret of  
Anjou, 1470.



Edward to punish him for his alliance with Burgundy. He persuaded Warwick and Margaret to come to terms. It was not easy to reconcile the two who for twenty years had been the bitterest of foes, but in such tortuous policy Louis XI was a master. Warwick at length declared for King Henry, and crowned the alliance with the usual betrothal, this time of his daughter Anne to Margaret's son, Prince Edward. At first fortune smiled on this perfidious alliance. In September Warwick and Clarence landed in the west; again Edward's men deserted him. He narrowly escaped capture at the hands of Montagu, Warwick's brother, and hastily fled from Lynn to Burgundy. Henry VI was taken from the Tower, "not cleanly kept, as should seem such a prince", newly arrayed, and set once more on a puppet throne.

Return of  
Warwick.  
Restoration  
of Henry VI.  
Flight of  
Edward IV.

Then the wheel went round again. Edward gathered his men, and landed at Ravenspur. He had but 300 with him; Richard of Gloucester came to shore in the Humber mouth with another 200; Earl Rivers brought another handful. It seemed a hopeless enterprise to unmake the Kingmaker with so small a force. Yet Ravenspur was of good omen as a starting-point for a cast at a throne, "since even in the same place the usurper Henry of Derby landed after his exile". The parallel goes closer; even as Henry of Derby gave out that he came but to claim his rightful Duchy of Lancaster, so Edward of March announced that all he sought was his Dukedom of York; as the one adventurer became the fourth King Henry, the other established himself as the fourth King Edward.

Edward's  
return,  
1471.

Edward's march south shows what courage and fortune may do. Montagu missed him, and followed too tardily in pursuit. Warwick drew in Clarence, to stop him in the Midlands, but Clarence went over to his brother. The Kingmaker prepared to defend his own castle of Warwick; Edward marched straight to London. Then, as Warwick followed, Edward again came northwards, and met him at Barnet. The battle, fought in a dense fog, which caused the wing of each army to overlap the other, was decided more by chance than skill. The Earl of Oxford's Lancastrians, after driving off

Battle of  
Barnet, 1471.



their Yorkist opponents, lost their way, and came back on the rear of their own force. Their badge, the "Radiant Star", was mistaken for Edward IV's badge, the "Sun with Rays", and they were greeted with a shower of arrows. At once a cry of "Treachery!" ran all down the line. Treachery was what all the array of Nevilles and Lancastrians had expected; none trusted the other, since times without number they had been foes. Immediately their ranks were broken. Warwick himself paid the usual penalty of a lost battle—being killed "something flying" in the chronicler's words. Heavy armour made battle safe, but defeat fatal.

Fortune indeed had turned her back on the Neville cause at last; for a month Margaret had been on the French shore waiting to cross; for a month a great storm had held her prisoner. She landed at Weymouth too late, on that same Easter Day which saw Warwick fight his last fight at Barnet. Her help, which would have changed the fate of that day, was now useless. She turned westwards, but on May 4 was overtaken and beaten at Tewkesbury. There, in the pursuit through the "Bloody Meadow", fell Prince Edward vainly begging for mercy. Somerset was taken prisoner and executed, adding one more victim to the roll of his luckless house. The father was killed at St. Albans; the elder son beheaded at Hexham; the third son killed at Tewkesbury; the second beheaded the next day after the battle. No male was left to the line of Beauforts, and the Yorkists may have rejoiced at the extinction of their hereditary enemies. They had still, however, to reckon with one descendant of the female line, a boy named Henry Tudor, then fourteen years old.<sup>1</sup>

Tewkesbury ends the third acute phase of the Wars of the Roses. The first battle of St. Albans saw the allied houses of York and Neville triumph over the Beauforts; Towton marked their victory over King Henry; Barnet and Tewkesbury found the old allies at each other's throats, and ended in the downfall of the Neville power. The last phase traces the gradual break-up of the Yorkist power owing to the same cause that had exalted it—family ambition.

<sup>1</sup> See table, p. 214.



The remaining years of Edward IV's reign passed quietly. The king was personally popular; Henry VI had been put out of the way—he died on the day of Edward's triumphant return from Tewkesbury, probably murdered by Gloucester; most of the Lancastrian leaders were dead; those who survived were exiles, poor, and in misery. Parliament, when it met, was on the whole content to let the king rule according to his pleasure. And pleasure was the main thing Edward sought. He did indeed embark on a war with France; if it was not glorious, it was at any rate of more practical use than many of our wars, for Louis XI bought him off with the payment of 72,000 crowns down, and promises of a further annuity. Edward might look forward to many years of life; he had two sons to succeed him; it might be assumed that the house of York was secure.

#### § 4. *The Break-up of the Yorkist Power*

Suddenly in 1483 Edward died, at the early age of forty-two, leaving his kingdom to his young son Edward V, and England was again thrown into confusion by the ambition of Richard of Gloucester, that uncle who personifies the wickedness of so many historical uncles. Richard had already given proof of that ruthless and unscrupulous ability which was the mark of his house. Battle, murder, and sudden death were his constant companions. He had fought well at Barnet and Tewkesbury; men believed that he had helped to stab Prince Edward; the murder of King Henry VI was laid at his door; he had quarrelled with his brother George of Clarence over the Neville inheritance, for the two had each married a daughter of the Kingmaker, and he contrived to fill Edward's mind with those dark suspicions which caused Clarence to be imprisoned in the Tower, and there put to death. With the death of a king, a prince, and a brother already to his account, he was an ominous "Protector" to two young nephews. Yet in the eyes of the nation, who knew little of State secrets and had grown used to violence, he was not distrusted. He was rather looked on as the strong man who

Death of  
Edward IV,  
1483.

Richard of  
Gloucester.



might secure peace. His dreadful methods of securing it lay still hidden in the future.

We have seen first Richard of York, and then Richard of Warwick pushed into treason, in order to secure their own lives.

**Richard's position:** In a sense it was so with Richard of Gloucester. Between him and the Queen's party, the Greys and the Woodvilles, there was an old feud. If they were supreme, his life was likely to be forfeit. Richard's first step was to "rescue" the young king from the hands of his Woodville uncle, Earl Rivers. Together with the Duke of Buckingham he met the King's retinue at Stoney Stratford, bringing a number of retainers with him. He captured Rivers and Sir Richard Grey, sent them to prison at Middleham, and himself escorted the King to London. His next step was to rid himself of Lord Hastings, with whom he picked an intentional quarrel over the council table, and ended it by causing his head to be smitten off on a log outside the door. Little Edward V was installed in his royal palace of the Tower, soon to become his prison and his grave. It was no use to lop off one heir if the younger brother survived, and the younger brother was in sanctuary with his mother Elizabeth at Westminster. Gloucester inveigled him out as a companion for his brother, and sent him too to the Tower.

**Richard king. Murder of the princes.** All was now ready. London was packed with retainers bearing the Boar and the Knot.<sup>1</sup> The court chaplain and Buckingham urged Richard's claim to the throne, on the ground that Edward's marriage was invalid: the silent arguments of the men-at-arms in the background were perhaps more convincing. The peers offered Richard the throne. Richard accepted it: to guard against opposition he had already ordered Rivers and Grey to be beheaded. To make himself more secure he caused James Tyrrel, governor of the Tower, to procure the murder of the little princes (Aug. 1483).

This vile deed eclipsed anything done before by either side. Not Clifford at Wakefield, nor Margaret at St. Albans, nor Montagu at Hexham, nor Edward at Tewkesbury, nor even Tip-

<sup>1</sup> Gloucester and Buckingham badges,



toft Earl of Worcester, the "great butcher of England", who tortured his prisoners ere he slew them, had ever matched this. Henceforth Richard had no friends save the cowards who feared to desert him, or the obscure men whom he promoted. One after another, plots were made. First his former ally the Duke of Buckingham, aided by the Courtenays and other westerners, plotted to put Henry of Richmond, son of Margaret Beaufort, on the throne. The stars in their courses fought against Buckingham. Storms prevented Richmond from landing, while a huge flood of rain so swelled the Severn into what was long remembered as "Buckingham's great water" that the Duke was cut off from his friends, captured and beheaded. Richard's ferocious treatment of Buckingham had only made one more section of Yorkists into Lancastrians. His next wild scheme was to divorce his wife Anne Neville,<sup>1</sup> and marry his niece Elizabeth of York, daughter to Edward IV. In universal horror all who still held by the cause of York resolved that it were better to have a Lancastrian on the throne than Richard III.

Thus in 1485 Henry Tudor, Earl of Richmond, now allied with the Queen's faction of the Woodvilles, and under a promise to marry Elizabeth of York, landed in Wales to win a final victory for Lancaster. Welshmen joined a man with a Welsh name. The Lancastrian houses of the Marches joined him; yet he seemed to have but a puny chance when at Bosworth, with 5000 men, he met Richard with more than double his number. But when Oxford led the Lancastrian attack, half Richard's men hung back, while the Stanleys turned traitors and fell on Richard's flank. The battle was won at a cost of a bare hundred men, and even the defeated side lost but few more. Yet one life counted many hundred. Richard himself, pierced with many wounds, lay dead on the field.

The battle of Bosworth, and the accession of Henry VII is held to end this troubled time. The union of the two roses, Henry the Red with Elizabeth the White Rose of York, brings

<sup>1</sup> She saved him the trouble by dying (March, 1485).



the chapter to an end with a touch of romantic completeness. We are tempted to think of the fairy prince, after many persecutions by robbers and demons, killing the ogre in single combat, wedding the princess, and living happily ever afterwards. The comparison is singularly false. There was nothing of the fairy prince about the astute, relentless, money-getting character of Henry VII. Nor did disorder die as suddenly as Richard III; it did not perish on Bosworth Field. It revived in Lovel's

Lambert Simnel.  
Battle of Stoke,  
1487.

insurrection, when Lambert Simnel was put up to personate the heir of George of Clarence, and when a mixed array of Yorkists, German mercenaries and levies from Ireland, where the cause of York had always been strong, fought one more fight at Stoke and lost it. Stoke is the last battle of the Wars of the Roses. Yet for eleven years more Henry was pestered with another Yorkist pretender,

Warbeck.

Perkin Warbeck, who pretended to be the younger of the princes murdered in the Tower. Perkin made the round of Henry's foes. He harboured in Burgundy with the Yorkist Duchess Margaret; he risked a landing in Kent; he intrigued in Ireland; he deceived James IV of Scotland into treating him as a royal prince, and won the Scottish king's cousin in marriage; he hovered like a thundercloud that will neither burst nor disperse. At length he landed in Devonshire, and was made prisoner. Even in prison the mischief he did was not ended. He inveigled his fellow prisoner Edward of Clarence into a plot to escape; and Henry VII's patience being at an end, both of them were executed. Warbeck deserved little sympathy; but it was hard measure for the young Clarence, who had been sixteen years in prison, first Richard III's captive, and then Henry VII's. The change of dynasty had brought him no relief; he was dangerous to both sides. Henry no doubt felt as Essex felt about Strafford, that "stone dead hath no fellow". There were no more plots.

So, as in the days of the Judges, the land had rest forty years, and more than forty years, from the trouble that had afflicted it. When we reach the end of the dreary record of violence, we are left to gather from the ruins some general lessons on the whole scene, and some indications of the future. And the first



thing to remark is the shattering of the power of the great houses.<sup>2</sup> They that took the sword perished by the sword; few barons lived to lose more than one battle, for the butchery in pursuit fell first on the heavily armoured nobles, and close behind the pursuer's spear marched the headman's axe. The fate of the Beauforts (see page 211) only differed in degree from the fate of many noble families. And just as in the press of battle once down meant down for ever, so too in the political struggle with the King. For a hundred years attempts had been made to make the throne the prize of family ambition; for thirty years this prize had been at the mercy of the best fighter. It had been a political tournament open to all competitors with royal blood in their veins, fought *à outrance* with the added liberty of striking below the belt. Henry VII, as the last competitor, emerged from the lists the ultimate victor. And he was victor: he never allowed the rivals he had overthrown to rise again. Their power had rested on the retainers; they and not the crown wielded the fighting force of the nation. By his statute of "Livery" Henry destroyed the retainer. It was made illegal to dispense "Livery", the uniform or badge "delivered" to those who had contracted to fight for their employer. No longer would the Bear and Ragged Staff,<sup>1</sup> the Knot,<sup>2</sup> the Portcullis,<sup>3</sup> or the White Lion<sup>4</sup> disturb their neighbours. A writer of a political squib in 1450 says:

End of the  
Wars of the  
Roses.  
Fall of the  
great houses.

Statute of  
"Livery".

"The Rote<sup>5</sup> is dead, the Swanne<sup>6</sup> is gone,  
The Fiery Cresset<sup>7</sup> hath lost his light,  
Therefore England may make great moan".

He bewails the death of the men. Had he lived forty years later he would have seen the extinction of the badges, and England had no cause to moan over that. The "private soldier" in his plain sense disappeared, and with him the curse of private war. Even so stanch a friend of King Henry's as the Earl of Oxford was sentenced to a heavy fine for welcoming the King with a body of men wearing the "Radiant Star" of de Vere. Henry could not endure to see his laws broken in his sight.

The badges of <sup>1</sup>Warwick, <sup>2</sup>Buckingham, <sup>3</sup>Beaufort, <sup>4</sup>Mowbray, <sup>5</sup>John Duke of Bedford, <sup>6</sup>Humphrey of Gloucester, and <sup>7</sup>John Holland Duke of Exeter.



Just as the Statute of Livery disarmed the rebel, so the Statute of Maintenance crippled the bully. For fifty years the law courts had been of little use, because no jury dared to do its duty against a great lord. When a case in which he was concerned was tried his men-at-arms would crowd the court, ready to intimidate the jury by what is cynically called "moral" force, ready even to back this up by physical violence, should the other fail. This "Maintenance" of an adherent's suit in court by pressure was now made illegal. Relieved from fear, the ordinary law courts could be trusted once more to give justice.

Yet one more precaution was taken by Henry VII in his creation of the Star Chamber. This court, though set up by Act of Parliament, owed its powers indirectly to the Crown. The King in theory was the fount of justice. Sitting in his council he could deal with offenders too powerful for the ordinary law. Henry VII had no wish to be judge himself; the days for a king on the bench were past; but his powers were handed over to the Star Chamber. In it sat the Chancellor, Treasurer, and Privy Seal, a bishop, and two chief justices, armed with powers to suppress all breaches of the law by offenders too noble or too high to be reached by the ordinary courts. It could punish by fines and imprisonment; it could deal with juries who gave unsatisfactory verdicts; it was, in short, a court to protect the weak against the strong. It is strange that in its later days it should be turned from its original use, and become the engine of tyranny, a byword of oppression.

Thus either in battle, or on the scaffold, or under the new authority of the Crown, the barons' power dwindled. No longer monopolizing the great offices of State, no longer exalted by intermarriage with royal sons and daughters—for Henry began a new policy of marriage—the great houses ceased to be a menace to the kingdom. Their power passed away, but the dread of it lived on later. As we shall see, under the Tudors the nation steadily supported the Crown, even when it seemed tyrannous, for fear that to weaken it might open the door to disorder once more.

The great baronial houses perished in the turmoil they had created. They perished, however, alone. The Wars of the



Roses hardly touched the common folk. The fact becomes clear at once if the Wars of the Roses be compared with the Civil War of 1642. That teems with sieges: the attitude of London, the resistance of Gloucester, the capture of Bristol, the plot against

Contrast between Wars of Roses and Civil War of 1642.

Hull; these, and a host of others, mark a political or military crisis. In the Wars of the Roses are no sieges, save of the Lancastrian castles in the north. No town was interested enough to stand a siege in the cause of Lancaster or York; when the enemy draws near it surrenders; when the enemy departs it thanks God that it is rid of a knave. The struggle was of the barons, not of the people. True, the party of York was more "popular" than the party of Lancaster. The Lancastrians had enjoyed a longer time to exhibit their capacity for misgovernment, and their supporters from the Welsh borders and the north were unusually fierce and lawless, even in a lawless age. Hence well-to-do merchants, peaceful traders, and honest craftsmen, were Yorkist rather than Lancastrian. But they confined their encouragement to sympathy; they took no active share. Hence, save for the local disorder, the realm thrived well enough; its industrial progress went on steadily; its wool trade with Burgundy was not interrupted; some of the older towns decayed, but new ones were springing up.

We find how little the bulk of England cared about the wars in another contrast to the Civil War. There, men act from high motives, and cling sternly to duty: they do not fight for their own gain, but because they believe King or Parliament to be right; and in the struggle we find famous men, and noble deeds in plenty. The Wars of the Roses produced no great man, and no noble deed. Warwick is the most striking figure, and it may be admitted that for a time he tried to do his duty. But when duty became difficult and dangerous, he chose treason. The truth is that there was no further place for him. He had raised Edward to the throne; henceforth he could only be his patron or his enemy. Edward was too masterful to obey a patron; Warwick, too proud to sink into a courtier, and too powerful to be tolerated as a foe. The idea of a great minister under the throne was not yet developed.



Thus, when Warwick fell from the path of honesty, he deserves some sympathy as a man placed in an impossible position and confronted with extreme temptation. But of the other players in the tragedy there is little that is good to be said. True that a few were loyal to their party, but that by itself is no great virtue; the majority were not even honest. Half of the battles were decided by treason or the expectation of it. Scarcely a noble house that did not sway and veer in its

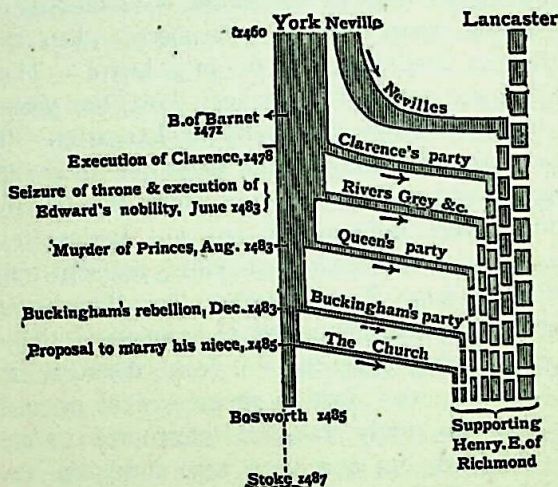


Diagram of the Break-up of the Yorkist Power

politics as the wind blew from York or Lancaster. Therefore, all the good features of the Civil War—loyalty, integrity, mercy—are replaced in the Wars of the Roses by treachery, self-seeking, and cruelty; the one is the best form of party struggle, and the other the worst form of faction.

The house of York, at one time so strong, was broken away piecemeal. First it lost the Nevilles; then the Clarence faction; then Richard III quarrelled with Edward's nobility, the Greys and the Woodvilles; his seizure of the throne cost him all Edward's friends and the support of Burgundy; his brutal murder of the little princes sent Edward's queen into the Lancastrian ranks; Buckingham rebelled against him; finally, his monstrous proposal to marry his niece alienated the Church. It was like



that familiar bundle of sticks, strong enough when tied, easily snapped when single. But the final snapping of them meant more than the destruction of a house, or of a party, or even of a policy. It is the break between medieval and modern England.

## XXI. Henry VII

### I. Introductory: The New Ideas

Physical geography makes us familiar with the idea of a watershed. A homely but misleading image likens it to a house roof, whose sharp ridge divides the rain falling on it; in reality the watersheds of our own land are generally less defined; they are often flat, boggy, high grounds, where the water lies in stagnant pools, apparently going nowhither. It is only when we go down the hill in one direction or the other that the actual course of the streams becomes evident. So with the division between medieval and modern England. Henry VII's reign is on the parting of the ways—its character is indeterminate. Most of the king's legislation is medieval; much of his policy, especially his marriage policy, is modern. Yet if we go back or forward a little we have no doubts about the character of the surroundings. Warwick is medieval, but Wolsey is not. Richard III, with an environment of axe and dagger, murder and sudden death, belongs to the museum of historical antiquities; Henry VIII, though scarcely less blood-stained, is yet essentially modern. We can almost picture him concerned with things of our own day, his mind full of modern questionings as to the Rise of Ritualism, What to do with the Unemployed, or Is Marriage a Failure?

The turning-point between Medieval and Modern.

It is not difficult to find the new characteristics which mark off the age of the Tudors. There is the policy of what historians call "*dynastic marriages*"—marriage alliances by which monarchs attempt to build up world empires, adding kingdom to kingdom by

Characteristics of the Tudor times:  
1. Dynastic marriages.



marriages, as the barons in the Wars of the Roses had added estate to estate. One development of this policy threatened to link England with Spain; another seemed likely to couple Scotland and France; a third, with more auspicious union, did join England and Scotland, and the union has not been shaken. There was the invention of *printing*; and there was

2. New Learning. the *new learning*, the substitution of criticism
3. Reformation. for entire obedience to authority. Then there
4. England as a sea power. was also the moving of the waters of religion,

ending in the *Reformation*. The realm wavered between the old faith and the new, and in the end became Protestant; that change, too, was final. Lastly, there was the abandonment of the old policy of conquering territory in France, and, in its stead, the inrush into the *New World* which began the making of the British Empire, our latest and greatest inheritance. Any one of these would suffice to mark a new epoch; together they cleave a huge chasm between the old and the new.

These characteristics, it is true, are not peculiar to England, nor indeed English in origin. Spain gave the earliest examples of successful dynastic marriages; she also, with Portugal, was first in the New World. The new learning had its birth in Italy. Germany led that revolt against Rome, which, with varying severity, attacked in turn every European country. Not merely does Tudor England differ widely from Plantagenet England; the same difference reveals itself between fifteenth-century Europe and sixteenth-century Europe, and to understand English history at this period we must note the change that was taking place in the states around.

Put briefly, it is the change from the old word "Christendom" to the modern word "Europe". In old times, though men of Italy, France, Spain, Germany, and England spoke different tongues and were of different race, yet they had some common bonds. They were all of one church, all members of Christendom, all in a sense under the headship of Pope and Emperor—the "Two Swords" to which Christ's words on Gethsemane were held to apply. The name "Christendom" had, thus, a *monarchic* sense; it implied a common faith, some unity of purpose, and a common obedience to Christ's Regents



on earth. But the name "Europe" bears no such meaning. It is *anarchic*, for Europe owns obedience to no ruler, and has no community of purpose; there is no longer even one church. Europe is a collection of independent states, each under its own government; these states are indeed joined by geography and entangled by politics, but each is <sup>The idea of</sup> "nation". seeking its own interest. This momentous change from "Christendom" to "Europe" was brought about by the appearance of a new political idea—the idea of the "*nation*".

The latter half of the fifteenth century saw the decay of feudalism and the building up of strong monarchies. It saw Louis XI create France; it saw that union of Aragon and Castile in the marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella, which made Spain; it saw the Tudor line begin to heal the wounds left by the Wars of the Roses, and set up a monarchy which was really supreme. In each country, too, came a vigorous growth of national spirit, and a pride in national power. This spirit of national ambition revealed itself in Charles VIII of France's expedition into Italy; in the long struggle between France and Spain, in which England took now one side, now the other; in the new idea that the religion of each nation was a matter for its own concern and its own decision; and in the rivalry of the New World. Thus in a sense the new characteristics which we observed as marking the Tudor England spring from a cause which is common to the whole of Europe, the *growth of national feeling*. For a time the new spirit was encumbered with the wreckage of the past—old beliefs, old policies, old traditions of the Medieval Papacy and the Medieval Empire. By degrees these were cleared away, and the new system, the society of "nations", set up in its place. True, that to begin with the important nations were only France, Spain, and England. Germany and Italy were still unnational, overweighted the one with the Empire, the other with the Papacy; and centuries had to elapse before these, or the unwieldy power of Russia, entered upon the scene of international politics. When we think of the State system of Europe in our own day, we are apt to forget how very new are some of its members.



## 2. The Seed Time

Henry VII's reign was a period of remedy and a period of seed time. The remedies belonged to past ills; these fall in their natural place at the end of the story of the Wars of the Roses. The sowing was to bear great fruit in the future. For the meantime the results were hidden. We need only notice briefly what like the seed was.

1. First came the planting of the overpoweringly strong Tudor monarchy. The Wars of the Roses had left the barons exhausted, the Commons utterly discredited, and the realm "despotism". filled with one great longing, namely, for peace. Peace could only be assured by the keeping of good order: order, it seemed, could only be kept by a strong king. Hence the determination of the nation to support the Crown. Let the king only be strong and of a good courage, and all would be well. Were he weak, or were the succession doubtful, disorder might break out again. Henry VII was avaricious, and Henry VIII seemed fitful and bloodthirsty; Mary was a Catholic, and a persecutor of Protestant subjects; yet all had, on the whole, the support of the people. The Tudors are sometimes spoken of as despots. If this be understood to mean stern absolute rulers, on whom Parliament imposed very little check, the name is fitting. If we infer that they held their people crushed down in an unwilling servitude, the inference is wrong. The Tudors were absolute because England believed in them, trusted them, and was willing that they should be absolute.

Various causes helped them to be absolute. Henry VII gathered a great hoard of money, then as now an unfailing source of power. His ministers—Cardinal Morton, Empson, and Dudley—used all sorts of methods to fill his exchequer, partly by demanding benevolences, more by imposing large fines on all who had trespassed on the rights of the Crown. Henry VIII spent all that his father had collected, but enriched himself in his turn by plundering the monasteries and the Church.

The coming into common use of gunpowder also strengthened



the Crown. For more than a hundred years gunpowder had been known, but the early guns and cannons were so clumsy that they did not at first supersede the bow and the old siege-engines. When, however, artillery began to be efficient, the value of the old baronial castle dwindled away; and as the king alone possessed artillery, he had an advantage in war with which no rebel could compete. Further, since bullets were no respecters of either persons or plate-armour, the armoured knight no longer enjoyed comparative immunity in battle as he had done in the old days." War was no longer a pastime for him. As the risk to his life increased, he grew less willing to hazard it, less ready to fly to arms in order to back a quarrel. Gunpowder and artillery.

2. Henry VII's reign saw the Genoese navigator Columbus discover the New World for Spain (1492), and Vasco da Gama round the Cape of Good Hope and open the route to the East for Portugal (1497). Nor was England content merely to look on. In 1497 some Bristol merchants fitted out an English ship, which under Venetian leaders—John and Sebastian Cabot—first reached the mainland of America. The value of these discoveries was slow to reveal itself. None the less, the change when it came was enormous. Commerce began to pass from the "thalassic" to the "oceanic" stage; that is to say, that while hitherto it had gone along the landlocked seas, especially the Mediterranean, it now began to put out on to the Atlantic. The change of trade routes meant much to England. While the Mediterranean had been the highway, England had been far off. The new highway lay at her door. Henceforth the states with an oceanic seaboard rose, those with a thalassic seaboard declined. England, France, Spain, and the Low Countries thrived; Venice, Genoa, and the Mediterranean ports dwindled. Henry VII's reign saw only the sowing of the seed; yet when the harvest came long years after, it was a great one for England. The New World "oceanic" commerce.

3. So, too, with the new learning. Taking its second birth, its "renaissance" in Italy, it spread to other lands, bringing with it an enthusiasm for learning, especially for classical learning, and a desire to search out what was true. In its origin there was nothing about the new learning hostile to the old The new learning.



faith. Indeed, more than one Pope encouraged and patronized the scholars. And when some of these, in their enthusiasm for Greek and Roman culture, were tempted into irreligious expressions, the Church treated them on the whole with the mild disregard which parents extend to wilful children. Unfortunately, though there was nothing anti-religious in the study of classical Latin, and even of Greek, the Church held in high value certain documents, such as the Donation of Constantine and the statements in the Forged Decretals, which in an ignorant age had been accepted as genuine, but which could not really bear investigation. The new spirit of research and criticism did not confine itself to classical texts; it attacked theological claims also. This the Papacy felt to be undesirable, if not dangerous; and thus the new learning and the theologians gradually parted company. In Henry VII's reign the severance of the ways had not been reached; Grocyn and Linacre, who taught Greek at Oxford, and Colet, who lectured on the Greek Testament, were mainly interested in spreading *learning*. Yet in the Flemish scholar Erasmus the signs of the coming struggle appear. Erasmus was always ready to mock the theology of the monks. Doubtless the monks' erudition was old-fashioned and often absurd. Yet ridicule is the first step in sapping the foundations of belief. Erasmus never became a Protestant, but he set the feet of many of his followers on the road. Again the seed lay in the ground germinating.

4. So it was also with the policy of dynastic marriages—marriages, that is to say, among royal houses, intended to bring great inheritances and unite realms. It may seem at first sight out of character that this policy should accompany the growth of a national spirit, since it is absolutely at variance with ideas of national policy as we know them now. To us the marriage alliances of crowned heads mean little or nothing in deciding national intercourse.

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries a monarch had not yet become merely an official. He was not yet the possession of his people. On the contrary, the people were his. He directed the policy of the country, and his friendship would naturally express itself in marriage alliance. Marriages formed the easiest



bond, and might prove most profitable in acquiring new dominions. Hence all statesmen were matchmakers. That a nation might object to such political *mariages de convenance* would not be a matter of serious concern to the kings and statesmen who arranged them. England was now for the first time about to join in a group of dynastic marriages, the effects of which deeply influenced European history during a great part of the sixteenth century; indeed European history of the time all hangs on them.

We have already mentioned Charles VIII's expedition to Italy. In 1494 that French monarch had allied himself with Milan, Genoa, and Florence, had marched an army through the length of Italy, and had seized the kingdom of Naples. The ease and effrontery with which his success was won alarmed everyone. Maximilian, who as Emperor had claims on Milan, and Ferdinand of Spain, who had claims on Naples, and the Pope, who was terrified at this sudden inthrust of a mailed hand from over the Alps, all sought means to guard themselves against this pushing dangerous French monarch. The natural enemy of France was in their eyes England. Hence they strove to make alliance with Henry VII. They argued that he could, if he chose, keep France occupied at home; and if France were occupied at home, she would not be in mischief in Italy. Henry was willing to join them, and thus England took the first step in the dynastic marriages which were to prove a menace to the country for a whole century, and, after all, end fortunately.

It is impossible to understand the history of the time without a knowledge of this group of marriages in which England was now joining.

The story begins with the marriage of Ferdinand of Aragon with Isabella of Castile, which formed the nucleus round which the nation of Spain gradually formed out of the mass of little kingdoms and provinces of the Peninsula. About the same time Maximilian of Austria (of the house of Hapsburg) had married Mary of Burgundy, thus winning for the house of Hapsburg all Charles the Bold's Burgundian dominions, including the Low Countries. The daughter and heiress of the Spanish

Spain and the house of Hapsburg: its alliance with England.

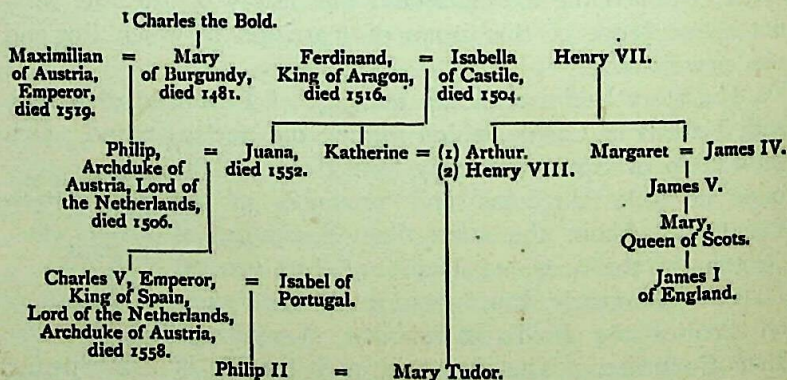


sovereigns, Juana, married Philip the Handsome, Maximilian's only son. This brought the Hapsburgs into Spain. The newborn son of Philip and Juana, Charles (born 1500) would be heir to vast dominions. Spain, the duchy of Austria, Burgundy and the Low Countries, lands in Italy, and the Spanish possessions overseas would all be his. The prize that was offered to Henry VII was the hand of Katherine of Aragon, sister to Juana, and Henry accepted it for his eldest son, Arthur. Arthur, however, died within a year of his marriage, and the bride was affianced to the king's second son Henry, afterwards Henry VIII.

Here, then, was the first great marriage-stroke, entwining the fortunes of England with those of Spain and Austria, securing its aid against the ambition of France. In the future lay other unexpected great events destined to spring from it—the English Reformation and the Marian persecution.

Not content with this, another blow was aimed at France by the politicians of the house of Hapsburg. France had been the enemy of England, and therefore the ally of Scotland. To detach the Scots from the French and so leave France isolated would be a master-stroke. To effect this the hand of Margaret, Henry VII's elder daughter, was offered to James IV of Scotland, and that monarch accepted it (1502).<sup>1</sup>

Having thus raised England to a position of great influence in Europe Henry VII died, and left the working out of his schemes to his son.





## XXII. Henry VIII and Wolsey

Henry VIII's long reign divides naturally enough into two periods. In the first the interest lies mainly abroad; eyes are fixed on international rivalries between France and Spain, the Empire and the Popes, and on diplomatic struggles amongst them. The second is taken up with the Reformation. The connecting point between the two is the question of the King's divorce. The two periods present a contrast. The earlier one, though full of an appearance of greatness, is in reality curiously barren of material results. Out of all the scheming, intrigues, and alliances emerges practically nothing that is tangible. The later period is perhaps the most momentous time in the whole of English history. Yet though in most respects the first period was fruitless, it was notable for one thing. It contained Wolsey: and Wolsey was the first statesman to raise England to a great place in European politics.

Henry VIII's reign.

Divisions.

The new feature of European politics of the time has been already mentioned—it was the rise of national feeling showing itself in the creation of nation-states.\* This new idea, however, was still encumbered with the old conditions: it was striving with the Medieval notion of Christendom, the headship of Papacy and Empire. Hence the chief theatre of the politics lay in Italy. It was there that the new forces would come most strongly in contact with the old surroundings. In Italian affairs, the Empire, Spain, and France were all concerned. The Emperor was by title King of the Romans. Spain and France both had claims to push in the kingdom of Naples. But England had no direct interests or claims. Hitherto in the eyes of Papacy and Empire, in the ideas of Christendom, her place had been unimportant. It is a significant fact that at the Council of Constance (1414), where the voting went by nations, England was not recognized as a separate nation at all. She was grouped with the Germans.

By intervening in these European politics which had their centre in Italy, England placed itself on a level with France, Spain, and the Empire; by the skill which Wolsey showed in



setting off one nation against the other, England for a time seemed to be arbiter in Europe.<sup>v</sup> Finally it was partly through Italian politics that Henry's divorce was refused, thus bringing about the breach with Rome and the Reformation.

England in  
European  
politics.

Since for the first twenty years of Henry VIII's reign the attitude of England was the chief question for all diplomatists, and since, further, England's diplomacy lay in the hands of the greatest diplomatist she has ever produced, some knowledge of the course of events is essential, even though at the end none of the results aimed at appear to be attained, and the outcome is barren when compared with the intricate and busy negotiations and changes which mark the time.

After Charles VIII's expedition into Italy, that country had been in a constant state of confusion. Louis XII, the successor of Charles VIII, had captured Milan. Then in alliance with Ferdinand of Aragon, French and Spaniards had made a joint attack on Naples, only to quarrel in the next year. In 1508 the selfish policy of the time reached a climax, when France, Spain, and Pope Julius II united in the *League of Cambrai* to attack and divide the territories of Venice. France took the lion's share of the plunder, and Pope Julius II, seeing with alarm that this sort of political brigandage would in all likelihood next be turned against the lands of the Papacy, deserted the French, and formed a fresh alliance for his own protection. This *Holy League* included Ferdinand of Spain. The natural way of getting rid of the French from Italy was to occupy them at home. Ferdinand planned an invasion of Navarre, and invited his son-in-law, Henry VIII, to attack Guienne. Henry VIII, flattered by the attentions of Spain, and youthfully anxious to make a name for himself, agreed to join the Holy League.

The Holy League  
between Spain  
and the Pope.  
England joins it.

The outcome of this was a fruitless expedition to Guienne in 1511, and the more successful campaign of 1513, in which Terouenne and Tournai were taken and the battle of the Spurs won. Another result was the battle of Flodden, where the Scots, faithful as usual to their French alliance, invaded England and were completely routed. We may leave the details of the battle



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to a later chapter, merely noting now the reason of its occurrence. Then, however, as Henry saw that he was being left to do all the work, while Ferdinand and Maximilian reaped the rewards, he withdrew from the alliance.

It is this turn of policy which marks the advent of Wolsey. So far, all had been of the old fashion—an attempt to recover the lost lands in Guienne, a war against the old rival, France, accompanied as usual by <sup>Thomas Wolsey</sup> ~~and his new policy.~~ an irruption of the old enemy, Scotland, over the borders. In the diplomacy and in the preparations for war Wolsey had made a sudden great reputation. Fellow of Magdalen, Oxford, rector of Lymington, chaplain to the Archbishop of Canterbury, royal chaplain to Henry VII, he found in the new king a master who gave him work and rewarded the vigour with which he performed it. In gratitude for Wolsey's efforts to fit out the expedition of 1513 Henry made him Bishop of Tournai, and in the next year Bishop of Lincoln. More important still, he gave him his confidence. Thus a new steersman stood at the wheel and gave a totally unexpected turn to it. He abandoned the policy of opposing France, and determined to turn that country into an ally.

Henry was already angry with Maximilian and Ferdinand, and readily agreed to Wolsey's schemes. The chance soon came. Louis XII's queen died: he was looking out for <sup>The French</sup> ~~a new bride.~~ <sup>alliance.</sup> With the utmost secrecy Wolsey negotiated a match between him and Henry VIII's youngest sister, Mary. That the king was fifty-two and the bride seventeen was, of course, not worth considering by a statesman. Questions of personal feeling did not weigh beside strokes of diplomacy. And the stroke was a master-stroke. Not only did it show that England, hitherto a blunderer in diplomacy, had a diplomatist to the full as subtle, silent, and speedy as any Spaniard or Italian; but by allying England with France it checkmated the Holy League; it marked the beginning of a complete change in policy, a policy which by degrees became established as traditional, namely to treat *Spain* as England's rival and encounter her power at sea and in the New World.

The eventual results were clear and of great consequence;



on the other hand, the immediate results were confused and unaccompanied by any very tangible advantage. To put it in another way, Wolsey's statesmanship only became clear as the century rolled on. For the present it was obscured by his diplomacy. And as diplomacy has to deal immediately with events as they arise, it often conveys the impression of being vacillating and opportunist. Since the first result of Wolsey's abandonment of the Holy League for a French alliance was to demonstrate how important England might be in European politics, the object of all diplomatists was to secure England's friendship. Thrown into one side of the balance or the other, England's weight would be decisive. Wolsey saw that the best and indeed the only way of preserving this position of authority was to keep, or to seem to keep, an open mind. To decide firmly for one side or the other was to lose the power of decision. Yet, while Wolsey's policy at times swayed between France and Spain, on the whole, at each important crisis, he turned towards France as the better ally.

If we summarize the course of events we shall see this more clearly. His first stroke, the marriage of Mary with Louis XII, was robbed of its value by the death of Louis in 1515. His

The passing of  
the old men—  
Louis XII, 1515.  
Ferdinand, 1516.  
Maximilian, 1519.

successor, Francis I, an ambitious young man, immediately plunged into war to regain the duchy of Milan, and defeated the Swiss allies of the duke at Marignano. Europe again grew

alarmed lest France should grow too strong. In the next year Ferdinand died, and his grandson Charles became his heir,

uniting under his rule an alarming mass of territory—<sup>1516.</sup> Burgundy, the Netherlands, Spain, and Sicily. Again Wolsey met this danger with a French alliance, and confirmed it with the pledge of Henry's infant daughter Mary to the Dauphin. With great skill he negotiated a Universal Peace, in which the Pope, the Emperor, France, Spain, and Scotland joined. Thus he made England appear as supreme arbiter in European politics.

In 1519 came a fresh change with the death of the Emperor Maximilian. Francis and Charles V were both candidates to succeed him: Henry's vanity compelled Wolsey to put his claim forward too, though his chances were never seriously treated.



Eventually Charles was elected, England maintaining a position of neutrality towards both sides in order that each might feel that any unfriendliness might throw Henry into his rival's camp. Each power tried to win Wolsey and the alliance of his royal master, by dangling before him the bait of the Papacy, and promising support at the next vacancy in the Holy See. This phase is marked by the glories of the Field of the Cloth of Gold, where Henry held conference with Francis, going straight from there to Calais to interview the Emperor Charles.

All was now in the hands of the young men. Charles of Spain, Francis of France, and Henry of England were much less cautious and wary than Louis XII, Ferdinand, and Maximilian. The problem, too, had been The young men. narrowed and intensified, for Maximilian's and Ferdinand's powers had coalesced. There was no longer Spain and the Empire to be considered. They were in one hand; and they lay on either side of France. The rivals, however, could not keep at peace; and Henry, urged by his Spanish wife, by the national connection between England and Flanders in commerce, and by the old-fashioned liking which his nobles had for a war with France, took the side of Spain. Wolsey disapproved, but he could not sway his master. Two campaigns, however, showed that it was easier to plan the reconquest of the lost English provinces than to carry it into effect. It was almost impossible to get money to carry on the war. Parliament would give no supplies. Wolsey's device of a benevolence, under a new and more alluring title of "the Amicable Loan", was met with clamour and even tumult. "My lord," said one of the rioters to the Duke of Norfolk, "since you ask who is our captain, forsooth his name is Poverty, for he and his cousin Necessity have brought us to this doing." In 1525 Francis was defeated and captured at Pavia,<sup>1</sup> and Wolsey had drawn off from the Spanish side. In 1527 the Imperial troops, under The sack of Rome. the Duke of Bourbon, sacked Rome, and made Pope Clement VII prisoner. Wolsey used the indignation which this outrage on the Pope caused to prepare a fresh French alliance. Close on the heels of this came the trouble of the king's

<sup>1</sup>"Tout est perdu fors l'honneur (et ma vie)."



divorce, leading to Wolsey's fall, and the Reformation. The languid interest which the country had shown in Wolsey's somewhat bewildering diplomacy suddenly sprang into a flame when the old grievance of the papal power in England came to the front. Here must be traced the beginnings of the Reformation.

## XXIII. The Reformation

### I. The New Learning and the Reformation in Germany

It is almost universally true of the great figures in the world's history that they are partly shaped by the trend of current opinion, and are so far the product of their time: yet more still they react on public opinion, and so shape their time to their own opinions. They are inevitable, and yet totally incalculable. So with Luther. To grasp the significance of his work it is needful to see wherein he merely took up a movement already started, and also how far he gave a new turn to its direction.

A scholarly knowledge of ancient Greek was, during the greater part of the Middle Ages, a very rare accomplishment even in Constantinople, and in other parts of Europe it was almost non-existent. But in Italy at the close of the 14th century, and especially during the 15th century, came a great revival of the study of ancient Greek. An interest in Greek once stimulated in Italy, there came a demand for Greek writings to read. These would be first the classical writers, and above all Plato. Curiosity, once stirred, spread. Classic Greek revived classic Latin; and the Italian Renaissance took the shape of a classic revival in letters and art. To it the world owes an amazing debt in scholarship, sculpture, literature, painting. But it does not owe the Reformation. The Italian phase of the New Learning was an artistic and scholarly temper of mind, but it had little that was practical about it. Cosimo and Lorenzo dei



Medici's band of scholars at Florence—where were brought up Michael Angelo and Ficino the Platonist scholar, the brilliant Pico della Mirandola, who was at twenty-three the greatest linguist of his time, and Poliziano, the most cultured poet of the age—lived in a joyous atmosphere of scholarly intercourse “seasoned with delightful talk and wit”; yet when there appeared in Florence Girolamo Savonarola, the one scholar who was in earnest about the moral reform of the city, the Florentines could only give him the fleeting interest that they gave at that time to all brilliant novelties, and eventually looked on without much protest when Pope Alexander VI had him burned. The Florentine school loved words but not deeds. It was the same at Rome when the newly-founded “Roman Academy” became so intensely classical that some members even aped a revival of paganism, and induced the Pope, Paul II, to imprison them. Pope Sixtus IV, however, became convinced that they were so entirely trivial that the Church could afford to pass them over. He was right so far as Italy was concerned. The spirit of the New Learning there showed no signs of being in any way anti-papal. It would study, comment, and criticize; but it would do nothing.

Yet in Italy, as elsewhere through Europe, there was much that needed doing. While the New Learning was rekindling Italian scholarship, the Church, as illustrated by its leaders the popes, seemed to be decaying in morals and influence. Even so honest and well-meaning a pope as Pius II Decline of the Papacy, 1470. could not raise a spark of real enthusiasm in his attempt to stir Europe once more to drive back the Turks. The days of crusading zeal were past. Gradually, from 1470 onwards, the popes slipped into what was going on around them. They became Italian princes, seeking to build up for the Church a strong principality. Only by having such a strong Principality, so it was thought, could the Papacy maintain its independence against the Italian princes who were fighting for supremacy. Sixtus IV began this “secularization of the Papacy”. A later successor, Rodrigo Borgia, Alexander VI, was suspected, with good reason, of using poison to gain his political ends, and his son, Cesare Borgia, was, during his



papal father's life, one of the most notorious villains in Italy. Julius II, the next<sup>1</sup> pope, was not a nepotist, nor greedy for his family, but his ambition to enlarge the Papal States kept Italy distracted with war during his whole papacy. Leo X (1513), of whom little was known save his youth and good nature, was chosen in the hope that he would give rest from the intolerable political activity that had marked the last two pontificates.

Still, the manifold abuses of the time, the emptiness of the Papacy, the alliance that was growing closer between the Church and the world, the aloofness that prevailed between religion and life, the gap that was widening between the new learning and the old theology, caused no real troublings of heart in Italy. Italy had acquiesced for so long in the position and claims of the medieval Church, as embodied in the papal system, that it believed this to be as enduring as the sun in the firmament. The scholars may have despised the churchmen a little, as being ignorant and unenlightened, but they accepted the Papacy and its ways. The Papacy, in its turn, tolerated the scholars with easy confidence. Indeed, some popes, such as Nicholas V and Leo X, were great patrons of literature and art; and Julius II gave architects and artists such as Bramante, Raphael, and Michael Angelo wonderful opportunities at Rome.

Germany and England had got what Italy had not—a sense that wrong is not the less wrong for being long upheld, and that right, even if new, may still be right. That

**New Learning  
in Germany  
and England.**

is the real spirit of the reformer, who, while he feels the night too short in which to learn, realizes still more acutely that the day is too short in which to act. Hence the northerners turned to what they felt to be of real concern in life. In Germany and in England the New Learning was practical. Men felt that learning was barren unless it bore directly upon life. To know better was useless, if it did not lead men to live better and to do better. Thus the scholarship which in Italy worked among the classics turned across the Alps to the field of the New Testament; seed sown here would not fall on stony ground or be choked by the cares of this world, but would bring forth fruit.

<sup>1</sup> But one. Pius III was Pope for one month.



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Two types, then, were characteristic of the New Learning in the north: the theologian, who, while not regardless of tradition and of what men had been taught in the past, yet applied his learning to it to find out what he believed to be the *truth*; secondly, the reformer, who, fearless of power and dignitaries, followed out his conclusions to do what he felt to be *right*. The best examples of these two types are Erasmus and Luther.

Desiderius Erasmus was a Fleming. Left an orphan and pushed into a monastery, he had as a boy acquired an intense dislike for monks and their life, and on coming of age had quitted his monastery. He had studied at Paris <sup>Erasmus.</sup> and then at Oxford, and later his wanderings included Germany and Italy. Too wide-minded to fall in with either the impractical spirit of the Italian Renaissance, or the theological brawling which was disturbing Germany, his critical mind set others on the path from which he himself ultimately shrunk back. His influence was displayed in two ways. First, in his book, the *Praise of Folly*, he taught the world, and especially the world of scholars, to laugh at the old-fashioned scholastic learning of the monks.<sup>1</sup> Many had in different ages assailed the monks with abuse, and done them on the whole little harm. To the poisoned shafts of Erasmus's wit no effective reply was possible. Yet ridicule of the monks and their opinions naturally resulted in a contempt for their order and their faith; this meant a sapping of one of the buttresses of the Church. But much more important than Erasmus's work as a wit was his work as a critic. He published, in 1516, a complete edition of the Greek Testament, and placed beside the Greek a new Latin translation, in which he corrected what seemed to him to be mistakes, while in notes he expressed freely his ideas upon current beliefs. One example will illustrate the whole. On the text, "Upon this rock I will build my church", he observes that this does not refer only to the Pope, but to all Christians. Methods of this kind would speedily call upon all the claims of the Papacy to justify themselves from the Bible, and would press for their rejection should they fail to do so.

<sup>1</sup> The book was not directed against the monks particularly, but against fools. Erasmus merely found the species plentiful in monasteries.



What Erasmus taught was put into practice by Martin Luther. A peasant by birth, he had entered an Augustinian house at Erfurt, but the life of the cloister gave him no comfort.

Martin Luther.

He was oppressed with an intense consciousness of inward sin, and this wrestling in his own mind trained in him the practical earnestness and the feeling of a close personal relation between man and God which marked him through life. He left the monastery in 1508, and became a teacher of theology in the new Saxon university of Wittenberg. A visit to Rome which he paid in 1510 revealed to him the depth of carelessness and indifference which pervaded the Papal Court. He set himself more anxiously than ever to study the Bible, in the belief that here was to be found the only remedy against what he called "the reign of slothfulness" which "made the way to heaven so easy that a single sigh suffices". So, when the Dominican friar Tetzel came into Saxony with a commission to grant indulgences (which remitted penances imposed after sin) in return for a gift towards the fund for building St. Peter's in Rome, Luther took fire. There was, he felt, grave danger that simple or careless men would interpret the giving of money in the wrong way; that they would not realize that sin must be atoned for by inward penitence, and that till this was done and absolution granted, charitable and pious actions and gifts, however virtuous, were useless. Accordingly he posted on the church door at Wittenberg a series of theses explaining his views, inviting discussion, and asking for an expression of "the mind of the Pope".

Luther wished to have a discussion on a doubtful point of theology; there was nothing defiant in his attitude at first; discussion of such points was by no means unusual.

Luther's quarrel with Rome.

But the Papacy had no mind for such a discussion. Doubtless the doctrine of indulgences led to abuses; later, at the Council of Trent, the Church had to condemn "disreputable gains" made by those who desired to obtain them; yet equally certainly the system of indulgences had proved most profitable to the Papacy. To destroy it would throw papal finance into confusion; to meddle with it was dangerous. Accordingly Luther must be bidden to hold his tongue, and be content that what the Church sanctioned was well.



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Here came into the issue Luther's personal character and the feelings of the time. Had Luther been fainthearted, he would have subsided into silence. As he was fearless, he persisted; in answering the objections of his opponents he enlarged his own ideas, following without faltering the conclusions which he drew from the study of the Bible and the early fathers of the Church. When commanded again to be silent, he enquired into the Pope's motives for ordering silence, and began to question whether the Pope might not himself be wrong. Other popes had erred. Why not Leo X? That the path was dangerous did not check Luther; that it would end in catastrophe seemed to him inconceivable. No religious reformer ever starts with the design of being a heretic; he only becomes one when he fails to persuade his opponents that it is they who are wrong and not he; and as this is so plain to him, he cannot see why they should fail to grasp it.

Yet Luther's resolution would not have been by itself enough; he would have perished as Huss and Savonarola perished, under a combination of the powers of Pope and Emperor, had not the state of Germany at the time made this <sup>Success of Luther.</sup> combination impossible. The Papacy was particularly unpopular, and even had the Emperor wished to act vigorously on its behalf against Luther, the princes and nobles of the Empire were divided in attitude. The dispute went busily on, and Luther's ideas were listened to with attention. He began to speak also in a way that could be understood. Discarding Latin, the learned language in which till now all theological discussions had been enshrouded, he appealed to the Germans in their own German tongue. And his ideas soon became more extreme. Commenting on the views expressed by an opponent at the Papal Court, he wrote: "When the Romanists see that they cannot prevent a Council, they feign that a Pope is above a Council, is the infallible rule of truth and the author of all understanding of Scripture. There is no remedy save that Emperor, Kings, and Princes should attack these pests and settle the matter, not by words but by the sword." From the attack on persons it is a short step to the attack on doctrine. He wished to sweep away four of the seven sacraments; he held that the liberty of a Christian man is only ruled by his union



to Christ in his kingdom, and therefore free from outward observances.

The one way now to extinguish Luther was to deprive him of support by removing grounds of complaint. This could only be done by making a serious attempt to right abuses and cool down anger by reasonable reform and concession. But concession as a policy does not often commend itself either to Popes, Emperors,

or heretics. Luther was condemned at the Diet of Worms in 1521, and the princes of the Empire were

adjured to root out his heresy. Some were lukewarm, others vigorous. Where vigour was displayed rebellion sprang up; still, so long as the Pope had the Emperor on his side he might hope that the cause was prospering. But five years later they quarrelled; the Pope had absolved Francis I from keeping the promises Charles had exacted from him after the defeat of Pavia, and accordingly Charles refused to support the Papal cause against the heretics; the imperial policy was reversed; each prince was given liberty to act about Luther "as he thought he could answer to God and the Emperor"—that is to say, as seemed best to his own taste. Immediately after, as if to show how little union there was even among the supporters of the Roman Church, the Imperial troops—a mixture of Spanish Catholics and German Lutherans, led by the French renegade Bourbon—sacked Rome with every conceivable species of horror and blasphemy, and held the Pope imprisoned in his Castle of St. Angelo. In this way Luther was flung about as a shuttlecock in the reckless game of politics, and Germany was left to hopeless religious confusion.

So long an account of the beginnings of the Reformation in Germany may seem out of place in a history of England; yet without a knowledge of what happened in Europe, the cause and the importance of the English Reformation cannot be appreciated. Luther had hit the Papacy hard and in a weak spot; the blow had been much applauded; by writing in German he had appealed to the people at large; what is more, he had survived. This was a large measure of success. Yet one thing he lacked. Some German princes had favoured him, but none had openly taken up his cause. No powerful state had put his



views into practice by rejecting the authority of the Pope. This momentous step was first taken by England. Here is the reason why the English Reformation was an event of paramount importance not only in our land, but over the length and breadth of Europe.

## 2. The Reformation in England: the Breach with Rome

English scholars had been as zealous as the Germans in seeking the New Learning, and had sought it in the same practical spirit. Grocyn studied at Florence, and came back to lecture at Oxford in 1491. John Colet, The Reform movement in England. Dean of St. Paul's, had, like Erasmus, valued his Greek most because by it he could unlock the treasures of the Gospels: he had unhesitatingly set aside the learning of the schoolmen, as being barren or misleading, and based his teaching on the literal words of the New Testament. In his foundation of St. Paul's Grammar School he gave clear proof of his aims, by causing to be placed over the master's chair in his new school the image of the child Christ, with the words, "Hear ye him". Erasmus himself taught at Cambridge, and inspired Latimer and Fisher with his ideas. In brilliance of wit and in seriousness of mind he found a rival in his own friend, Thomas More. More's book, *Utopia*, describing the ideal land of "Nowhere", was far in advance of its time in its wide and tolerant principles. He pictures a commonwealth where the aim of law was the good of its members; where all were free to worship as they pleased "because it is not in a man's power to believe as he list"; where none were poor, because goods were held in common, yet all had to work because work was necessary to human wellbeing; where the sovereign was removable "on suspicion of a design to enslave his people"; where all children were taught; and where the punishment for crime was so to be ordered to make the criminal "ever after live a true and honest man". This foreshadows all that the modern state has striven after and a good deal that it has not yet attained. No book shows so well



as *Utopia* how the human soul may leap forward out of the trammels of its time. Yet though More, Colet, and the "Greeks" at either University struggled against the "Trojans", who still clung to the old teaching and the old ideas, they could make little practical progress in the real task of reform by themselves. Till the King or Wolsey would stir, nothing could be done, and both were for the present immersed in foreign diplomacy.

**Wolsey's failure.** Wolsey, it is true, saw the need for reform, but the moment was not propitious, and he was too busy ever to find a time. Being Cardinal-Legate he had the power to deal with the Church, but he put off doing it. His few efforts were cautious and prudent, but cautious reformers satisfy neither side. The doom of Laodicea clings to them. They alarm and irritate those who hold to the old system, while the hot reformers condemn them as triflers. Even Wolsey's suppression of a few decrepit monasteries, and the establishment of "Cardinal College"<sup>1</sup> at Oxford, was turned to his reproach. The clerical party saw in him a false friend; the nobles only saw him striving after his own vainglory.

Yet, although the strong hands that held England gave no opportunity to the Reformers, such as was offered in feeble and disunited Germany, there was fuel ready should the torch be applied. Since the days of Edward III and Richard II, Englishmen had vigorously resented Papal interference. The statutes of Provisors and Præmunire<sup>2</sup> had expressed the popular dislike of the Papacy's thrusting intruders into English benefices, or attempting to enforce its decrees in England. However, the

"grim two-handed engine at the door"

stood rusty, but ready. Should cause of affront be given, the King would find his people willing supporters against Rome. And the great source of Henry's power was that he was so completely an Englishman of his time. He understood his subjects and they him. So far he had no quarrel with the Papacy; he heartily condemned Luther, and had caused to be published in his own name a confutation of that heretic which Pope Clement had rewarded with the gift of the Golden Rose.

<sup>1</sup> Now Christ Church.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 192.



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Clement's predecessor, Leo X, had conferred on him the title of "Fidei Defensor"—a title which still figures on our coinage. But Henry had no deep-grounded respect for the Papacy. Were Popes complaisant, Henry was correspondingly gracious; should differences arise, Henry's zeal would cool; and in 1526 the cause of quarrel was not far off. Henry was tiring of his wife Katherine.

It must be admitted that Henry and Katherine had little to hold them together. Being a Spaniard, she had disliked the French alliance to which Henry, under Wolsey's guidance, had turned so frequently, and she had <sup>The King's divorce.</sup> pestered the King with more zeal than wisdom. Henry on his side was disappointed that she had borne him no son to follow him, and secure the succession; each grew cool towards the other, and Henry found her companionship more and more distasteful. But his ideas were suddenly turned in the direction of a divorce by the fact that he fell violently in love with a lady of the court named Anne Boleyn. To win Anne, it was needful to get rid of Katherine; once more Henry turned to Wolsey for help. A technical ground was not far to seek. Katherine had been his brother Arthur's widow; hence the marriage had been illegal but for a dispensation from the Pope; the King's conscience now became convinced that the dispensation was wrong; could not his marriage be declared null and void? Popes had done greater things for monarchs than this.

Wolsey did not oppose the idea: perhaps he even suggested it to Henry; he would be glad to be rid of Katherine and her Spanish views. But though he hoped the Pope might be persuaded, yet there were many difficulties. Nothing <sup>Difficulties in the way of Wolsey.</sup> could be said against Katherine, who was of most virtuous character. England would probably sympathize with her, especially when the real object, namely, that Henry should marry Anne, had leaked out. Both France and Spain would oppose it—France, because Henry's daughter, Mary, was betrothed to the Dauphin, and such action would leave her illegitimate; Spain, because Charles V was Katherine's nephew. And in 1527, when the affair was being cautiously broached, came the sack of Rome, which left Pope Clement at Charles V's mercy. No more inauspicious moment could be



chosen for trying to persuade the Pope to offer the Spanish king a deadly affront. No wonder that Wolsey hesitated.

Things went as he expected. Neither Spain nor France gave him any help. Clement put things off, then appointed Wolsey and Cardinal Campeggio to hear the cause in England, but did not give them the power of final decision. Campeggio reached England in October, but the trial did not begin till the following June. Its verdict was expected in July, but at the end of that month Campeggio declared the sitting adjourned for two months more. This renewed delay made Henry furious.

Here was revealed what had been hitherto but dimly seen. The real master of England was after all not Wolsey but Henry; and Henry showed the quality which Wolsey lacked—determination, and disregard of tradition and consequence which might stand in his way. Hence, while men were waiting for the cautious Wolsey to find his way round this thicket of political thorns, Henry, like a bull, burst through it.

He threw over Wolsey, and directed his attorney to sue for a writ of *proemunire* against his minister on the ground that, acting as Papal Legate, he had broken the statute. The charge was iniquitous, since Wolsey had obtained his legatine authority at the King's own pressing desire, in order to use it for the King. But that, he knew, would not save him. He made instant and humble submission, acknowledging that all his goods were most justly forfeit to his "most merciful" master. Henry seized his goods, deprived him of the Great Seal, and dismissed him to his see of York. He probably was not quite sure that he might not want him again. Wolsey's enemies, however, were too strong; the Cardinal was arrested at York for high treason, and dispatched southwards to the Tower. Death, however, was more merciful than the King: broken-hearted, feeble, and despairing, Wolsey struggled to Leicester, and there died. Henry's last act was to send instructions to an envoy straitly to question his old servant on his deathbed as to what he had done with £1500 which he had scraped together after his fall, the last remnant of that abundant wealth which had been spent for the King, or seized by him.

Two steps which the King took close on Wolsey's fall are



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most significant of the future. He issued writs for the summoning of a Parliament, and he appointed Sir Thomas More to succeed Wolsey as Chancellor. Parliament save for one brief session had not met for fourteen years; it was much longer since a King had entrusted his conscience to a layman's keeping.<sup>1</sup> But both signs point the same way: the sway of the Church in politics was tottering, the "minister" and the layman were rising to take its place. Wolsey is the last "Eminence" in that long chain of ecclesiastical statesmen that tower through English history from Dunstan onwards. None of them, great as they were, o'er-tops Wolsey. Yet with the suddenness of a precipitous fall the chain breaks off and is submerged. Far off in the sea of time one mitred head will rise again above the political waters: that is Laud; but he is lonely in history, out of place and out of date.

The seven years from 1529 till 1536 during which this Parliament sat, saw the breach between Henry and Rome widen year by year into a yawning gulf. Each step in the quarrel is marked by a fresh inroad of Parliament on the position of the Church. Thus this "Reformation" Parliament is not unlike the Long Parliament. Each came after a prolonged period of unparliamentary government which may be called "tyranny". Each sat for what was for its age an extraordinary number of sessions; each, by an odd coincidence, assembled on the same day. The one tore the Papal authority to tatters, as its successor tore the Royal power. There is one crucial difference: the Long Parliament worked of its own force; the Reformation Parliament owed its vigour to the King. Henry, as it were, having roused the national watchdog from its slumber by a series of thumps on its kennel, urges it against a trespasser; yet grasps the angry beast by its collar, pretending to his enemy that he cannot hold it back much longer, while privily stirring it to a more terrifying show of fury.

The first attack fell on a vulnerable point—the pocket. Hitherto the clergy and the Church had been in the habit of getting large fees from the probate of wills, and from "corse presents" (mortuary fees, paid when a dead body was taken through a parish); some of the clergy had made money by

<sup>1</sup> The Chancellor is "the Keeper of the King's Conscience".



farming and trading; all these sources of revenue were docked. Many of the clergy had held more than one benefice; these "pluralities" were now forbidden, as was the practice of non-residence, unless special leave was granted by the King. Hitherto this leave had been granted by the Pope. Here was the first grasp of the royal hand that was to tighten round the clergy.

In the second session all the clergy were entangled in the mesh that had snared Wolsey, the penalties of *Præmunire*.

*Præmunire.* Wolsey was guilty, and so were they—of obedience.

The Convocation of Canterbury hastily bought their pardon with a gift of £100,000, York followed with £18,000. Under the law the laity were involved too, but the King graciously pardoned the rest of his subjects wholesale—for nothing—"of his benignity, special grace, pity, and liberality" as the Act of Parliament put it.

Ere the next session came round the King's agents had been busy at Rome, but had made no progress over the annulling of the King's marriage. Consequently Parliament gave *Act of Annates.* another turn to the screw by the Act of Annates:

"albeit the King and all his subjects be as obedient, devout, catholic, and humble children of Holy Church as any people with any realm Christian", yet the payment of annates (the firstfruits of a benefice) to the Pope was henceforth to cease;<sup>1</sup> any bishop who paid them should forfeit lands and goods to the King: and if in consequence of the act the Pope were to refuse the bull confirming the election of a new bishop, the bishop should be appointed by two of his brethren without waiting for the Pope's consent. But as King and Parliament did not wish to use violence "before gentle courtesy first attempted", the King was to have the power of declaring whether the Act should be put in force.

But if nothing could be got from Rome, Henry was ready to do without Rome. In the spring of 1532 Cranmer, fortified by the favourable opinions of some universities, which *Act of Appeals.* had been consulted at his own suggestion, was busy over Katherine's divorce. To nullify her certain appeal to Rome, Parliament stepped in with the Act of Appeals forbidding all

<sup>1</sup> They did not lapse altogether: an Act of 1534 bestowed them on the Crown.



appeals to Rome in matters of will, marriage, or divorce, either for the future or already entered on: henceforth the appeal was to go to the Upper House of Convocation. Henry could control that.

By the time Parliament met for its fifth session the divorce had been granted, and the marriage with Anne publicly acknowledged. Matters having been driven to this extreme point, Parliament was still bolder. For the first time it spoke of the Pope as "the Bishop of Rome otherwise called the Pope"; arranged that bishops for the future were to be elected by the dean and chapter of the diocese under a royal writ called the *congé d'élire*, but that they must elect the person named by the King in the writ—conferring a liberty with one hand and taking it back with the other. Peter's-pence, and every other payment made to Rome were lopped off. No church ordinances were to be made save by the King's consent. Yet in case the Pope should even at the eleventh hour repent, Henry was again empowered to suspend or enforce these acts at his pleasure. Further, by the First Royal Succession Act the marriage with Katherine was declared null, and Katherine's daughter Mary cut out of the succession.

Between the fifth and sixth sessions the Pope annulled Cranmer's sentence of divorce; whereon the King retorted with a Royal Proclamation ordering all manner of prayers, mass-books, and rubrics "wherein the <sup>Act of Supremacy.</sup> Bishop of Rome is named or his presumptuous proud pomp preferred", to be abolished, "and his name and memory to be never more remembered". Parliament followed this up with the Act of Supremacy declaring the King to be the supreme Head of the Church of England, and an oath was exacted calling on men to refuse all obedience to any foreign authority, and to accept all Acts made by the present parliament. For refusing to take this oath the Chancellor, Sir Thomas More, and Bishop Fisher were imprisoned.

The seventh and last session saw the overthrow of the smaller monasteries. As the King had now absorbed all the ecclesiastical powers which the Pope had formerly wielded in England, he had become visitor of the religious houses, which had hitherto



been under the control only of the officers of their own order, and of the Pope. They were soon to learn what a visitation meant. All of less annual value than £200 were suppressed, and their lands forfeited to the King. With this last blow delivered the Reformation Parliament ended.

Dissolution of the smaller monasteries.

Looking at its work as a whole two things emerge. To begin with, there never was a Reformation so completely mundane. It was political and nothing else. The only sense in which it was partially religious is that it was sacrilegious. Starting with a determination to make the worse appear the better reason over the divorce, King and Parliament proceeded coldly and methodically to bring the Church to heel, rout the Pope, and scatter his allegiance. Neither justice nor sentiment were allowed to interfere with business. The war had no parade of powers, and no thunder of heavy ordnance on the English side at any rate. Each stroke fell on the enemy's supplies; slowly, bloodlessly, but inexorably he was starved out—in the cause of conscience. That it could be done in this way is proof that in general the nation agreed. Rome and its authority were not beloved of many, and by many were heartily disliked. Most would echo the words of his grace of Suffolk, "England was never merry while we had Cardinals among us". A clearance had been needed and was now made. As to what would come next the bulk of Englishmen did not trouble their heads.

Secondly, we must observe that the Reformation Parliament, which had overthrown the Pope, raised the Crown to a height unmatched before or since in English history. Besides conveying to himself all the Papal powers and much of the Church's property, Henry had been permitted to enforce statutes or not as seemed good to him; the succession had been practically left in his hands; he was armed with a new Treason Act which made even *thought* against him treasonable. Bulky as he was, he was every inch a Prince.

These two qualities of the Reformation Parliament's work are reflected from the man who, under Henry, had most to do with the shaping of it. Thomas Cromwell was a lawyer who had grown rich by moneylending, had sat in the House

Thomas Cromwell.



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of Commons, and had served Wolsey. But he was essentially a King's man at heart: not a Cardinal's. His early days of adventure in Italy had made him familiar with despotic power ruthlessly exercised, and he halted at nothing to make the king supreme. As "Vicar General" under the Act of Supremacy, he devised the measures which brought the Church under the King. He restricted even the right of preaching to those who held royal licenses, forced the clergy to preach in favour of the Act of Supremacy, overthrew first the smaller monasteries and then the larger, turned over their property to the Crown, and swept out of his way all opposition. Sir Thomas More and Bishop Fisher, the foremost scholar and the most saintly bishop of the day, were executed for refusing to accept the Act of Supremacy. The monks of the Charterhouse were hanged in a batch on the same charge, or left to die in chains in Newgate. When the dissolution of the smaller monasteries provoked the north to rebellion, Cromwell never faltered. This "Pilgrimage of Grace", as the rebellion was called, was dangerous enough, for it was inspired by very genuine religious alarm. More firmly Catholic than the south, less ready for the new ideas, men believed that the attack on the monasteries would be followed by an onslaught on the churches. The rebels, led by Robert Aske, took as their banner the Five Wounds of Christ, and demanded that the monasteries should be restored, the reforming bishops turned out, and Cromwell banished. This last aim brought in the northern nobles, for Cromwell was looked on with mingled loathing and fear by the old nobility, as an upstart venomous snake. The Percies, Lords Westmorland and Latimer, Earl Dacre of Yorkshire, all joined; and these could bring the finest fighting men in England with them. Abbots and priors all gathered to the cause; the Abbot of Barlings rode up in full armour. Henry sent Norfolk to meet the rebels; but as he was too weak to fight, bade him make terms. He was only waiting his time; the rebels dispersed, but renewed rioting soon after gave Henry and Cromwell the excuse for revoking all that they had yielded. The leaders were seized; Lord Darcy, Lord Hussey, and the Abbots of four great monasteries were all hanged. Lesser rebels shared the same fate in dozens throughout the

Pilgrimage  
of Grace.



north. It was a stern lesson in what the Royal Supremacy meant.

This failure of the "Pilgrimage of Grace" led to the downfall of the greater monasteries. Some were forfeited for treason; others found it wisest to submit to the king. <sup>The greater monasteries.</sup> The monks were pensioned. Six of the great monasteries were refounded as secular chapters round the six new bishoprics; a little of the property was used for schools; a little for erecting fortresses on the coast. But the bulk of it went to the king; and he dispersed most of it—some by gift to his ministers and courtiers, much by sale—so that in a few years it had passed into many hands, and thus afforded an effectual guarantee that the Reformation would be permanent. If England were to submit again to Rome, that land would have to be restored; and in the course of a few years it was so parcelled up that 40,000 families were reckoned to have an interest in it, and these 40,000 would be sturdy Protestants. It was on this rock that Mary's schemes for restoring Roman influence shipwrecked. To take this land back by force was impossible; she had not money to buy it back; and it remained a bulwark of the Reformation, just as the National Debt of money borrowed by William III and George I proved a bulwark of the Revolution Settlement. Alike in each age, visionaries plotted for a restoration of the Old Faith or the House of Stuart; but sound moneyed men, with an eye on their estates or their funds, looked askance on schemes that menaced "property".

The remainder of Henry VIII's reign bears no very marked characteristic, either of progress or reaction. Some men deplored what had been done; others felt that a halt had been called too soon. Those in front cried "forward", and those behind cried "back". Yet both these were small parties; the bulk of the nation was for the time quite satisfied, and the king, who adequately represented the bulk, was satisfied too. Hence not much was done, and that leaned now to one side and now to the other.

The chief forward step was taken in the translation of the Bible. Most of the copies of Tyndale's version, printed abroad



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and smuggled into England, had been destroyed. Miles Coverdale was encouraged by Cromwell to make a new translation; this was combined in 1537 with Tyndale's work by John Rogers, who published it under the assumed name of Matthew. The king was persuaded to license it; and Cranmer having written a preface for it, the "Great Bible" was placed in the churches. Private persons were also allowed to have copies. Although in 1543 the liberty of reading the Bible was withdrawn from "husbandmen, workmen, and women except gentlewomen", yet in 1544 the Litany and in 1545 services for morning and evening prayer were issued in English.

While the Bible was thus placed in the hands of the people, no encouragement was given to depart from the old faith. Opposed to Cranmer and the Reformers in doctrine stood the Duke of Norfolk, leader of the nobles; Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester; Bonner, Bishop of London; and, above all, Henry himself. Their attitude is expressed in the statute of Six Articles (1539), which was intended as a dam to the rising tide of the Reformation. It enjoined (1) a belief in the doctrine of transubstantiation; (2) the practice of communion in one kind; (3) the illegality of the marriage of the clergy; (4) the necessity of keeping vows of chastity; (5) the continuance of private masses; (6) the use of confession. It will be seen that these maintain a great part of the essentials of the old faith. The first was, of course, the stronghold of the Roman doctrine and the point of attack of all the Reformers: on it, too, rested much of the authority of the priests, and this aloofness of the priesthood was to be maintained by Articles 3 and 4. Their authority over the consciences of their flock was upheld by the continuance of confession. Article 2 was intended to clear England from a share in the old Bohemian heresy now revived in Germany. Having added the penalty of death for the first infraction of the first article, and for the second breach of any of the others, Parliament felt comfortably assured that under no circumstances could those who kept the Six Articles be accused of being heretics.

This extremely definite declaration against any attempt to change doctrine was followed by the downfall of Cromwell. In



1539 he had wished to strengthen the Protestant princes in Germany by an English alliance, and he persuaded the king to promise to marry Anne, sister of the Duke of Cleves.

**Fall of Cromwell, 1539.** The alliance broke down; but Henry, who had now been wifeless for four years, determined to keep his promise. Anne had been represented to him as beautiful; she was, however, exceedingly plain, and though Henry manfully went through with the marriage, he at once procured a divorce from his "Flanders mare". He showed his annoyance with Cromwell; and Cromwell's enemies, the nobles with Norfolk at their head, at once turned on him. He was attainted on an absurd charge of treason and executed (1540).

Little calls for notice between 1540 and 1547. The war with Scotland falls in its place in the chapter of Scottish history. The king married twice more: first, Catharine Howard, and then, after her execution for misconduct, Catharine Parr. In order to make it easier for the government to pay its debts, the coinage was much debased; but the effects of that measure belong to the reign of Edward VI. Almost the last thing that the king did was to cause the Earl of Surrey (Norfolk's son) to be put to death for aiming at the Crown.

So the reign ended as it had begun—with the headsman's axe: and in truth this political engine, with its less dignified helpmeet the halter, is so prominent that we are tempted at first to think the reign particularly blood-stained. It did not present that aspect to men of its own time. After the long-drawn-out disorders of the Wars of the Roses, and the nervous dread of their revival in Henry VII's day, Henry VIII's time was a period of peace and prosperity. England was "merry", and "good King Harry" popular even to the end. He was neither merciful, nor logical, nor faithful, nor grateful. But he knew what he wanted and what England wanted, and he took the first and gave the second without scruple of conscience.



### 3. Edward VI and the Premature Reform in Doctrine

Henry, empowered by Parliament to settle the succession in his will, left the throne first to his son Edward; if he died without an heir, the crown was to go to his daughter Mary; if her line failed, to Elizabeth; and finally, <sup>The succession.</sup> to the descendants of his younger sister, Mary. It will be noticed that Henry's presage of the failure of descendants came true; but his will was not completely carried out, for the crown in the end passed to the descendants of his elder sister, the Scottish line, which he passed over.

Meanwhile, as Edward was only nine, a Regency was inevitable, and everything would turn on the political and religious ideas of the Regency. Henry had nominated a council, with men of different shades of opinion included in it, in the hope that it would do nothing but maintain things as they were. Yet here again Henry's plans failed, for the young king's <sup>Somerset, the Protector.</sup> uncle, Seymour, managed to win over to his side part of the council, and got himself declared Lord Protector of the Realm. With their help, and adding to himself the title of the Duke of Somerset, he prepared to put his ideas into practice.

Several serious dangers lay ahead of him; opportunities which might be taken, but which if neglected would prove fatal. To begin with, there was a growing party desirous of <sup>Social and religious troubles.</sup> further change in religion, some of them genuinely anxious for a complete form of Protestantism, others merely greedy for further plunder of property devoted to religious uses. This party, though prominent, was small; large masses of the country, especially in the conservative north and west, were opposed to any meddling with their old faith. Besides religious trouble there was serious economic distress. Ever since the Black Death the process of converting corn land into pasture, often by driving off the old manorial tenants,<sup>1</sup> had been busily pressed. As sheep-farming employed fewer men, there

<sup>1</sup> See p. 188.



were many left without work. This distress was aggravated by the dissolution of the monasteries. The monks had been old-fashioned lords, often well content with old ways. The new owners of the monastery lands were active "improvers", with no respect for custom or old tenants. And where distress had existed the monasteries had done something to relieve it. Further trouble was caused by Henry's debased coin, for money no longer circulated at its face value; when men were in doubt whether a shilling was worth a shilling or only sixpence, all business transactions were upset, and the evil tended to grow. Not all the coin was bad; but men naturally were unwilling to part with good shillings when they got them, and strove to pay away the bad coins. The good money was hoarded, or even melted down for the sake of the silver, and the bad money took its place. Thus, with doubt and division in religious matters, widespread distress in agriculture, and confusion in all business transactions, the new Lord Protector would have his hands full. Another important, though less urgent question, would also demand attention—that of the young king's marriage. In all these matters Somerset failed, the more lamentably since, though he was an enlightened and honest man, the goodness of his ideas was quite obscured by the badness of the methods which he employed to carry them out. In aims his policy was admirable, in results purely disastrous.

At the outset he had an opportunity which had not been given to any English statesman since Edward I—the chance to join England and Scotland by a royal marriage. Mary Queen of Scots, the little orphaned daughter of James V, was the obvious future bride for young Edward VI. Scotland being divided between a French Catholic party, headed by the Queen-mother, Mary of Guise, and an "English" party, who favoured a Reformation, Somerset's plain duty was to take care not to unite these parties in the one thing in which they could be united, namely, in a common hatred of England. This, however, he at once proceeded to do. Finding that his scheme of betrothal was not at once kindly received, he marched an army into Scotland which utterly defeated the Scots at Pinkie Cleugh (1547). This was

Somerset's  
Scottish  
policy.



not the way to win Scotland. Huntly put the Scottish feeling into memorable words: "I mislike not the match, but the manner of the wooing". The little queen was sent over to France, where she was shortly affianced to the Dauphin. Somerset's hasty violence had ruined his own plans.

In religious matters he acted just as rashly. Convinced that England was ready to go much further with the Reformation, he ordered the abolishing of the mass and the use of Latin in the service, and sent commissioners round the country to pull down the images in the churches and destroy the pictures on the walls. As some of the commissioners' servants carried out these orders in an offensive way, parading the streets dressed as mock-priests, and burning the pictures with the same sort of spirit as a later generation burnt effigies of Guy Fawkes, this caused intense anger in all the old-fashioned parts of the country. For time out of mind generation after generation had used the same service, and, in their own simple way, had treasured it as the sacred ground whereon men may approach to the presence of God; unnumbered prayers had been uttered before images which helped dull minds to contemplate their Redeemer and the saints; sacred pictures had hallowed and beautified churches, and had grown to be loved for the permanence of the blessed hopes they had given to one sorrowful heart after another. Now all were rudely swept away, and to the simple country folk it seemed as if the gateway of heaven had been closed, and new prison-houses with white-washed walls put in the place of the many mansions of the blest on earth.

Abolition  
of images  
in churches.

On minds still in bewilderment, seeking reasons for this change, fell another blow, but this time chiefly on the towns. The old guilds, so common in every town, were almost as familiar in men's lives as their religion. They had had many objects: some, such as the regulation of trades, declining in value; some taking the shape of festivities and miracle plays, more amusing perhaps than useful; some chiefly religious in aim; others, however, were of great practical use. Were a guildsman sick or in distress, he looked to his guild for aid; if his tools were stolen or his house burnt, his guild

Forfeiture  
of guild  
property.



helped him. If he died in poverty his guild buried him, educated his children, looked after his widow, and paid for masses for the repose of his soul. If a man wished to leave money or lands in charity, he left it to his guild, and, as this form of bequest was common, many of the guilds were rich. The greedy eye of the Government fell on them; they, like the monasteries, held much property devoted to religious uses in the shape of masses for the dead. And so an act was passed confiscating their property; in theory their religious property—in reality everything that could be seized. The effect was something as if at the present day the Government were to seize the property of all benefit societies, sick clubs, and workmen's friendly societies. Here again was a measure angering and injuring masses of poor men, all the more offensive because the London guilds were spared, being, it may be supposed, too dangerous to molest.

Trouble was not long in coming. Somerset's brother, Lord Seymour of Sudely, first plotted a rebellion. He had married Henry VIII's widow, Catharine Parr, and sought to make for himself a position like that of Warwick the Kingmaker. He coined money and forged cannon in his own foundries, fortified Holt Castle, and intrigued against the Protector. The Council dealt with him by act of attainder, and had him executed; but the treasonable schemes of so near a relation did Somerset no good. Next came further proof of the Protector's failure in the

Risings in  
Devonshire  
and Norfolk.

shape of two insurrections, which burst out at the same time in the west and in the east, and here once more Somerset's incapacity was made plain. The insurrection in the west, where men were still mainly Catholic in faith, was entirely religious in character; it was caused by the New Prayer Book of 1549, which had been put in place of the old service. In the eastern counties there was no religious discontent, for Norfolk and the east, owing partly to immigrants from the Low Countries, was strongly Protestant. Rebellion here sprang from social causes: the enclosures of commons and arable land for the purpose of sheep-farming had thrown many out of work; the debased coinage had upset all manufacturers and all workmen, all wages and all prices; in Norwich and the towns men were indignant at the confiscation



of the guilds. Thus at the same moment the most widely severed parts of the country, the poorest and the richest—the backward, agricultural, Catholic west, and the progressive, manufacturing, Protestant east—were each driven to rebellion.

There is only one thing which a Government can do with rebellion, and that is to put it down. Inquiry into the reasons for it, sympathy with men misled into it, remedy for the causes of it, can only come after, namely, when the rebels have laid down arms and become once more citizens. This the well-meaning Somerset did not see. For the Devonshire rebels, in arms for their old religion, he had no sympathy and no mercy. It was indeed some time before he had the upper hand of them. Through the summer of 1549 the west was in a flame; 10,000 men, under Pomeroy and Arundel, in arms; the mass everywhere celebrated; and Exeter besieged. So instant was the danger that a body of German mercenaries had to be taken into the Government service. These under Lord Grey de Wilton met the rebels at St. Mary Clyst and Sampford Courtenay, and, with every advantage of arms and discipline, had hard work to overcome them. No such fighting had been seen in England since the battle of Stoke. Some four thousand were killed in these fierce combats, and at the end the leaders were hanged at Tyburn, and so order was restored.

So stern in the west, where German firelocks were turned against English peasants, Somerset in the east was mild to the point of feebleness. With the great body of rebels, who, under their leaders Robert and William Ket, encamped on Mousehold Hill, outside Norwich, dominating the town, and levying provisions from the gentry round about, he felt some sympathy, for he had realized the evils of the enclosures and of the bad money, and meant in time to mend them. Hence he tried to make terms. This only encouraged the rebels to remain under arms. Inevitably, fighting began between them and the neighbouring gentry, and the Council naturally turned from Somerset to a stronger man. They ordered the Earl of Warwick (afterwards Duke of Northumberland) to attack the rebels, which he did with great vigour, slaughtering a number and dispersing the rest.

With this reputation as a man of energy, Warwick turned to



overthrow Somerset. The Protector's failures had been many; his rivals in the Council were jealous of him; he had no strong party behind him. In 1551 he submitted to the Council, and was sent to the Tower; pardoned for the time, he was restored to his place in the Council; but Warwick feared him too much to leave him in peace, and in January, 1552, he was executed on a charge of conspiracy.

So fell Somerset, one of those tragic failures, an honest and well-meaning man, whose real fault was that he was in advance of his time. Misled into thinking that the opinions round him in London and at court were held throughout the country, mistaken in his belief that the nation, which under Henry VIII had thrown off the yoke of Rome with such enthusiasm, was really anxious for a reform in doctrine, rash in his changes, yet, in spite of his failures, many in England loved him. At his execution those near the scaffold dipped handkerchiefs in his blood to treasure as relics of a good man. He was, after all, honest, which is more than can be said for the man who followed him.

At the date of Somerset's death Edward VI was nearly fifteen. All had the highest hopes of him. He was intensely popular, as his father had been as a young man. Those round Edward VI. him at court knew his ability, his earnestness, and his sincere Protestantism. The nation looked forward to the rule of a king who would sweep away all the failures of the Regency. "When he comes of age," cried an enthusiastic Hampshire squire, "he will hang up an hundred heretic knaves." Probably such methods would not have overmuch distressed a king who noted coldly in his diary his uncle's death thuswise: "This day the Duke of Somerset had his head cut off between eight and nine o'clock in the morning." As it happened, Edward was destined never to rule.

The last two years of his reign serve in some ways, however, to illustrate his ideas. A "Second Prayer Book", issued in 1552, went much further towards Protestantism than the first; more of the ceremonies of the Church were abolished; Articles of Religion—forty-two in number—were published, and other changes made, all following the ideas of the more extreme Reformers.



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At the same time some useful steps were taken. To relieve the distress from which the labourers were suffering efforts were made to check the enclosures and to revive agriculture; the first Poor Law enacted that collections were to be made in each parish for the poor; and the expenses of the royal household were lessened. Unluckily time, the one great healing element in all political troubles, was lacking; what England needed was stable government, and it became increasingly clear that another change was at hand. Edward's health failed, and the next heir was the Catholic Mary. Where the future was so uncertain, the present was bound to be dark, unsettled, troublous.

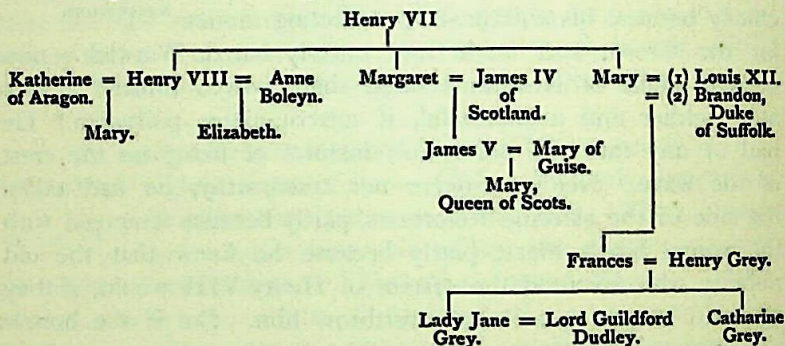
To no one was the prospect more menacing than to the Earl of Warwick, who had contrived Somerset's fall, and now ruled in his place. The son of Henry VII's minister, that Dudley whom Henry VIII had put to death chiefly because his enterprise in collecting money for the Crown had made him bitterly hated, Warwick—now created Duke of Northumberland—had proved himself a capable soldier and a successful, if unscrupulous, politician. He had at any rate the politician's instinct of being on the crest of the wave. Neither sincere nor trustworthy, he had taken the side of the extreme Reformers, partly because it agreed with the young king's ideas, partly because he knew that the old nobility who favoured the system of Henry VIII would, if they returned to power, at once overthrow him. But if the honest Somerset could not succeed in making the country accept a form of Protestantism for which it was not yet ready, the dishonest and selfish Northumberland was certain to fail. Balancing thus upon the favour of the young king and the unsteady support of the Council, Northumberland in 1552 found his position becoming more and more precarious as Edward VI's health failed. Accordingly he set to work to secure himself. It was not difficult to convince Edward that, if Mary came to the throne, the Reformation would be undone, and Edward was sincere in his support of the Reformation, even if Northumberland was not. Accordingly, by Northumberland's advice, he made a will setting aside both Mary and Elizabeth as illegitimate, and leaving the crown to Lady Jane Grey, the granddaughter of Henry VIII's

Northumberland.  
The Protestant  
succession.



youngest sister. As Northumberland had shortly before married his second son, Lord Guildford Dudley, to Lady Jane, this stroke would not only have secured the Protestant succession, but also the family influence of the Duke himself. He would at any rate be safe, and as father-in-law of the new queen he might hope to be ruler of the kingdom.

If the nation had been set on having a Protestant sovereign, Northumberland's scheme was sound enough. Lady Jane certainly had all the good qualities of a queen. It soon became clear, however, that the nation was not so set. When Edward died, in 1553, Northumberland tried to lay hands on Mary ere she learnt the news. But a friend brought her immediate warning, and she slipped away to her Catholic friends, the Howards, in Norfolk. She at once declared herself queen, and everyone supported her claim. Even in



London Northumberland's plans failed hopelessly. His proclamation of Lady Jane as queen was received in silence or with protest. His son, Lord Robert Dudley, sent to arrest Mary, reached her in Norfolk, but his men would not fight. The fleet declared for Queen Mary. Thousands of men were rallying to her cause. Even Northumberland's own force, which he led into the Eastern Counties, mutinied and deserted him, and on July 20, less than a fortnight from Edward's death, he was forced to give up hope, and himself proclaimed Mary queen at Cambridge. If he thought to disarm the anger of a Tudor in this way he was soon undeceived. He was arrested the next day, and sent to the Tower. There he grovelled further, and



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on the scaffold just before his execution announced that he had been always at heart a Catholic. His recantation earned for him the scorn of the Protestants; and instead of being regarded as a "second Joshua", he was despised as a traitor, a second Achitophel.

#### 4. Mary: the Catholic Reaction

At her accession Mary was thirty-six; half a Spaniard and half a Tudor; neither by age nor blood likely to be easily turned from what she had set her mind on. Moreover, all her life she had been soured. Her mother divorced and scandalously treated, herself declared illegitimate, her claim to the throne doubted, surrounded by enemies, often held as a sort of prisoner, half a foreigner holding ardently to the supremacy of Rome which the nation viewed with suspicion, she was by training and faith quite out of sympathy with England. Northumberland was not a wise politician, but he did know what Mary was likely to be as a queen.

England had no such terrors. A Catholic sovereign was not to be feared in the same way as a Catholic sovereign was feared in James II's day, because England had so far never known any other sovereign than a Catholic. Henry VIII, even in his most anti-Roman moments, had never doubted that he was a most sincere Catholic. Edward VI had never ruled; all his reign was filled by Somerset and Northumberland, and if such were examples of Protestant rulers, they were not encouraging. The mass of Englishmen looked on their new queen as a daughter of Harry Tudor, and welcomed her with the loyalty they always gave to all Tudors. The attempts at reform in doctrine under Edward VI had been profoundly unpopular. They wished for a return to the days of "good King Harry". That Mary would try to bring England again under the power of Rome, was ignored in the enthusiastic welcome which was given her.

Hence Mary's brief reign is divided into two parts. First came a period of consolidation, and of reversing the premature reforms made under Edward VI. In the second period the queen disclosed her real plans, married a Spaniard, and tried to restore the Papal power; and it was

Mary's reign  
divisions.

19-20

(5271)



during this second period that the persecution was made which left such bitter memories of her reign.

At first, then, Mary and her subjects were at one. By common consent the mass came in again. Parliament, meeting within two months of the queen's accession, repealed the religious acts of Edward VI, and went back to the "divine service used in England in the last year of Henry VIII's day". Some of the more prominent Reformers left the kingdom—John Knox, who had been Edward VI's chaplain, among them. Archbishop Cranmer, and the bishops of the same party, Latimer and Ridley, were deprived of their sees, and the old occupants of the sees of Winchester and London, Bishop Gardiner and Bishop Bonner, restored. Even the queen's ideas for her marriage did not offend England. The nation, indeed, wished her to marry Courtenay, Earl of Devon—the last representative of the Yorkists; but, urged by her cousin, the Papal Legate, Reginald Pole, and the Spanish Ambassador Renard, she refused this, and insisted on marrying Philip II of Spain. The idea of a Spanish match was unpopular, but no real resistance was made. There was certainly an insurrection, favoured by Courtenay, the Duke of Suffolk, and Northumberland's friends, and led by Sir Thomas Wyatt, but it failed to find much support. Even in London, where the cause of the Reformation was strong, the citizens held London Bridge against Wyatt. Most of the leaders were captured. Wyatt and Suffolk were beheaded; so, too, were the luckless Lady Jane and her husband; Courtenay was imprisoned, and even the Princess Elizabeth was sent for the time to the Tower. The treaty of marriage was confirmed by Parliament, and in July, 1554, Philip came to England and married Mary.

This was the most threatening of all the dynastic marriages of the time. "True, it nominally secured for England the alliance of the most powerful state in Europe." It might be regarded as a counterblow to the marriage between Mary Queen of Scots and the Dauphin. France and Spain were at the time the two great lords of Europe. Mary of Scotland married France: so be it: then Mary of England would do better, and marry Spain—and



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Spain was a greater country than France. National vanity so far might be soothed in the glories of the Spanish match, but in truth there were innumerable dangers. Not only were both kingdoms in danger of being swamped in the stormy sea of the struggle between France and Spain; not only might an actual union of the French and Scottish thrones be menacing for England if Spanish troops were to be landed to protect us; far worse than either was the peril that England might be absorbed into the Spanish monarchy.\* The "Habsburg net" was round her; the octopus that had stretched its tentacles so wide in Europe had her in its grip. She might lose independence, as the Netherlands were losing it, and become, as the Netherlands became, but a Spanish province—and with disastrous results. True, that in the marriage-treaty precautions had been taken: Mary alone was to manage English affairs and revenues; no foreigner was to hold command in army or fleet; England was not to be drawn into war with France through the match; if there was a son, he was to rule in England, Burgundy, and the Netherlands, but not in Spain.\* These were sane precautions; but men take precautions against what they fear to be likely to happen; and treaties are not always kept.\* The son of such a match—of a half-Spanish mother and a Spanish father—would have every element of danger about him. As it happened, England was spared that son. Wyatt's battle-cry, "No Spanish match!" voices the popular dread; and he and his supporters were right.\* For more than thirty years the results of this marriage hung like an ever-deepening stormcloud over English politics; and then in the thunder of the Armada it burst and passed away.\* But a whole generation of Englishmen had walked in the fear of it.

This "Spanish match" is the turning-point in Mary's reign. With Spain at her back she set out on her scheme of restoring England to the Roman allegiance. The Papal Legate, The Catholic Reaction. Cardinal Pole, was permitted to land. Careful management of the elections produced a compliant Parliament, which repealed Henry VIII's ecclesiastical laws and begged that their sin of separating from Rome might be pardoned. Pole accepted the submission, withdrew the interdict, and England was again included in the Roman obedience. He yielded, indeed, something more: the



old monastery lands were to be left to their present possessors. Everything could not be rubbed off the slate all at once. \*

The old heresy laws were now revived by Parliament, and there began the persecution of the Protestants. Hooper, Bishop of Gloucester, Rogers, a canon of St. Paul's, Ferrar, <sup>The</sup> burnings. Bishop of St. David's, and fourteen others were tried for heresy. Doubtless Mary and her advisers expected them—or most of them—to recant. Only *one* did so; the rest all went to the stake. "This was the prelude." In May, 1555, it became clear that the queen was not going to have the child she expected, and her disappointment may have quickened her zeal for Holy Church. Through the summer the persecution sharpened. In September, Cranmer, Latimer, and Ridley were tried together. Latimer and Ridley were burnt at Oxford. A delay was given to Cranmer; burning an archbishop required special authority from Rome, and besides there were hopes that he might recant; but \* after making a submission he manfully withdrew it, and declared that he would die a Protestant, thrusting "that unworthy hand" that had signed his submission first into the flames. \*

Cranmer was the last notable victim of the persecution; indeed, with the exception of about half a dozen Church dignitaries, there were no notable victims. No distinguished layman suffered for his faith—either the distinguished laymen, or the government, were too cautious. But there were some two hundred and seventy martyrs—little-known men—"some there be that have no memorial". \* Everyone knows Latimer's bold words to his brother bishop Ridley: "Play the man, Master Ridley; and we shall this day light such a candle by God's grace in England as I trust shall never be put out". \* The candle was lighted, doubtless. But it may be questioned if it was Latimer, Ridley, Cranmer, and the greater martyrs who did most to light it. It is not easier for a bishop to be a martyr than for an ordinary poor man, but if need be, it will be expected of him to die for his faith as a soldier will die for his country: \* martyrdom at times becomes an episcopal privilege. \* Ordinary men are more shocked by the sufferings of the great, but more convinced by the heroism of their fellows. \* It was possible to doubt the reforming zeal of Henry VIII's day which was rewarded with Church lands,



or the enthusiasm of Edward VI's reign, when the king and his ministers led the way, but there could be no doubt about Mary's Protestants, whose only guerdon was the martyr's death for conscience' sake. Hitherto Protestantism had been somewhat suspect, as savouring of worldly gain, dubious motive, and wavering faith. The determination which took simple folk to an agonizing death by fire, rather than give up their faith, made the Protestant cause.\*

Mary hoped by her persecution to convert England, and she did much to convert it—but it was to the other side. "A sullen hatred rewarded her and Pole and Bonner and the Catholics, and above all Mary's Spanish husband Philip, who, it was assumed without much reason, had pushed Mary to persecute." Yet little could be done. A rebellion would fail without help from abroad. If French troops came, Spanish troops would certainly come also, and the realm become a battle-ground. Anything was better than that. Besides, it was known that Mary was stricken with a mortal disease. "To wait was best."

Yet short as the time left to Mary was, it was enough to bring one more humiliation—another result, men said, of the Spanish match; for friendship with Spain had meant <sup>The loss of Calais.</sup> war with France. "England had nothing to gain from war, but France had, for Calais was still in English hands. On Calais, then, the French attack was directed, with every hope of success, for the garrison was small and the fortifications ruinous. Lord Wentworth, in command at Calais, knew what was preparing. He wrote urgently for men and money, but Mary would send neither. "Every penny she could spare was spent on the pious task of restoring churches and refounding abbeys." In answer to Wentworth's letter of 29 December, that the French army was at hand, Mary replied that she had certain information that "no attack on Calais was intended". Before the letter reached him Wentworth had information even more certain, for 25,000 French were at the gates: with a garrison just able to oppose one man to every fifty of his assailants Wentworth held on for five days, but never a man nor a ship was sent from England. On January 6 he surrendered. Lord Grey in the neighbouring fortress of Guisnes still hung on, but on January 20 he too had to yield.



So vanished the last English possession in France. At first valuable as giving a gate for English trade to the Continent, or as a point of attack on France, the use of Calais had long passed away. England's policy was changing to a new phase. She no longer sought a conquest of France; her eyes were beginning to turn over sea; and Spain was to be henceforth her national foe. But that was not seen at the time; Calais had been in English hands since 1347. It was the one fruit left of the harvest of Crécy, Poitiers, and Agincourt, the memorial of the Black Prince and Henry V; the nation's credit seemed to rest on its safe-keeping, and deep was the humiliation at its loss. Even Mary, un-English as she was, declared that when she died the word "Calais" would be found written on her heart.

## 5. The Religious Settlement

When Mary died on November 17, 1558, the solution of the long-drawn-out problem of the Reformation was left to Elizabeth. Thirty years had seen many changes. First Henry VIII's *Political* Reformation, the overthrow of the Papal power in England but the leaving of doctrine practically unchanged; then under Edward VI an attempt at establishing a *reform in doctrine*. This had proved premature and unpopular. Then under Mary *Reaction*, first to Henry VIII's system, and then back to Roman Catholicism pure and simple. This last had also been exceedingly unpopular. Now the cautious wisdom of Elizabeth and her great minister Cecil devised a fresh system which proved enduring.

Certain conditions of the problem, however, had altered and so made Elizabeth's task easier. The Protestant party had grown stronger, and the Catholic weaker. The trans-  
Elizabeth's  
advantages.lation of the Bible, for one thing, had worked on the side of the Protestants, for though the Bible itself is on no side, yet the more the Bible was in men's hands, the more they inclined to judge in religious matters for themselves; and this habit of "private judgment", in place of accepting what is laid down by "authority", is the basis of Protestantism. Secondly, as has been shown, Mary's persecution had worked for the



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Protestant cause; it had made waverers see that the Protestants were really honest and in earnest. Thirdly, it was no longer possible to rest content with the system of Henry VIII: no country could continue to profess itself Catholic and yet be in flat defiance of the Pope. If Elizabeth's government was to endure it must have the support of either the Protestants or the Catholics; it could not halt between two opinions for ever. Finally, the Catholic cause had weakened, owing to the idea that it was a *foreign* cause. It was the cause of Philip of Spain; and Elizabeth's Catholic rival, Mary Queen of Scots, was the wife of a French prince. Hence the loyalty to Elizabeth grew more and more to be a Protestant loyalty; and as the Protestants were the loyal party, the Catholics tended to be thought the disloyal party—a charge which was sometimes quite unjustified, yet sometimes true, and always hard to rebut.

As the conclusion of the long drama of the Reformation one seems to expect some great political stroke, some wide-reaching act that will settle the vexed question. There is, of course, nothing of the kind. The details of "the Elizabethan Settlement" are not striking. Compared with the fierce changes of the last reigns they seem moderate. As Pole was dead the Archbishopric of Canterbury was vacant. It was given to Matthew Parker, a moderate Protestant. Elizabeth followed this by granting leave for the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the Commandments to be said in English in the Church service, and for the gospel and epistle to be read from the English version. In 1559 Parliament met and drew up the Settlement. Briefly the details of it were:—

Elizabeth's religious settlement.

1. The Repeal of the Act of 1554. This again abolished the Papal power in England and brought into force Henry VIII's ecclesiastical legislation.

2. An Act of Supremacy, declaring the queen to be "supreme of all persons and causes ecclesiastical as well as civil".

3. An Act of Uniformity, accepting (in the main) Edward VI's Second Prayer Book; and laying down that vestments of the clergy and ornaments of the churches were to be as established by Parliament in the second year of Edward VI. The "Articles of Religion" of Edward VI, reduced from 42 to 39, were re-enacted.



It seems little on which to base a great Church settlement; not much that was remarkable, nothing that was exactly new. On the other hand it was conspicuously wise. The first act was inevitable: England would never accept the Papal power. But this blow once struck, everything was done to spare the wounded feelings of the Catholic party. The Act of Supremacy is far more cautious than Henry VIII's blunt declaration that he was "Head of the Church", and only office holders had to take the oath; the ordinary layman was left alone. The Prayer Book is the Prayer Book which we have to-day; and no word against Rome is in it. Even the Litany, which enumerates a very comprehensive catalogue of bodily and ghostly perils, has nothing about the Pope. There was such a clause in Edward's Prayer Book, but Elizabeth's advisers struck it out. Prayer is offered for the conversion of "Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics"—but not of Papists. The Communion service is so worded that those who believed in the Real Presence, and those who did not, could alike accept it. Alternative prayers for the sovereign, one more, the other less definitely Protestant, are provided. Men could do in many ways as seemed good to them and yet feel they were within the law. There was little severity threatened save to those who obstinately maintained the authority of the Pope; these were declared traitors. All save one of Mary's bishops and not a few of the clergy refused to take the oath of Supremacy, as was to be expected, and resigned their posts. Elizabeth was able to fill them with men of her own choice, and so had the heads of the Church thoroughly in sympathy with her. Even where Catholics refused to come to church and had the mass celebrated at home, the Government made no attempt to interfere save by imposing a shilling fine for not going to church. A man was permitted to compound for himself and his household at a rate of 20s. a month. The payment is not so trivial as it seems; to get the value of the money it must be multiplied by ten or so; and as the "Recusants" had also to pay their own priests, the being a Catholic was expensive. One after another of the county gentry, desiring to economize, found attendance at his parish church an easy way of doing it. One came in after another, and *time*



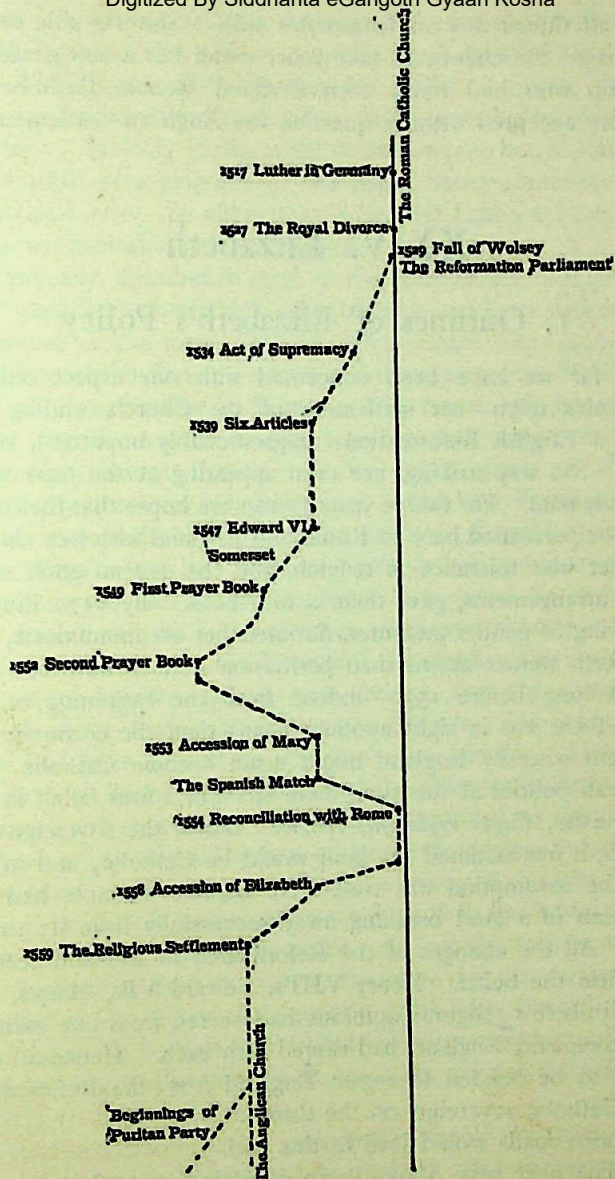


Diagram illustrating the Divergence of the Anglican Church from the Roman Catholic Church

19-20\*

(C 271)



above all things was on Elizabeth's side. She was able to give her system the chance to take root: under her a new generation grew up who had never seen England Roman Catholic and therefore accepted without question the Anglican Settlement.

## XXIV. Elizabeth

### 1. Outlines of Elizabeth's Policy

So far we have been concerned with one aspect only of Elizabeth's reign—her settlement of the Church, ending the English Reformation: unquestionably important, yet in **Outlines.** no way striking, nor even appearing at the time to be definitely final. For twelve years there were hopes that the queen might be persuaded back to Rome, and England with her. Meantime her wise tolerance in religion, and the general good sense of her arrangements, gave them a firm hold. By 1570 Pius V, despairing of gentler measures, declared her excommunicate, and henceforth sterner means than persuasion were to be tried.

Yet long before 1570—indeed from the beginning of the reign—there was in sight another means than the conversion of Elizabeth whereby England might again become Catholic. In European politics at the time there was still a firm belief in the state maxim, *Cujus regio ejus religio*. Where the sovereign was Catholic it was assumed the land would be Catholic; and in the main the assumption was true. No definite example had yet been seen of a land breaking away successfully from its ruler's creed. All the changes of the Reformation in England seemed to confirm the belief. Henry VIII's, Edward VI's, Mary's, and now Elizabeth's religious opinions had veered from one extreme to another, and England had veered with each. Hence all that seemed to be needed to regain England from the Reformation was a Catholic sovereign on the throne.

Various roads would lead to this end.

1. The next heir, Mary Queen of Scots, was a Catholic. If she were to succeed, all would, in the opinion of the Catholic



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leaders, be well again: more especially if after the death of her French husband she were to marry some English Catholic.

2. The throne might be won for Philip of Spain, the late queen of England's husband, either by force or by marriage with Elizabeth. Possibly Philip might himself marry her, if the Papal dispensation were granted; or she might marry someone of the Hapsburg house. In either case a Spanish Catholic ascendancy would be re-established in England.

Politically, Elizabeth's reign is the story of the struggle with the "Counter-Reformation"—the term is used to denote that compound of the great Catholic allies—Spain, the Empire, and the Papacy—which had done so much to check Protestantism in Europe. The forces were enormously strong. Spain and the Empire together then meant practically all Europe, except France and the Baltic states. Spain was enormously rich from her possessions in the New World, and her soldiers were at the time the best in Europe. Further, the abuses in the Papal court had been set right, the old grounds of complaint removed, and at the Council of Trent (1546–63) much had been done to win back the wavering allegiance of many who had leaned for the time to the Reformed doctrines. The Popes had once more become earnest and zealous, and the same spirit marked all the leaders of the Roman Church. The great Jesuit order had been formed to win back the heretics. Much had already been done by the powers of the Counter-Reformation in Germany, and their efforts were now concentrated on England.

The Counter-Reformation.

Against this attack the key of England's entrenched position is the throne. So long as Elizabeth lives, all is safe for the time: if her heir is a Catholic, there is peril in the future; if she has a Protestant heir, all is secure. At first the danger menaces covertly from a Scottish queen supported by the forces of the Catholic allies. After that queen's death the danger takes a fresh shape; it is open war with the Counter-Reformation and its champion, Spain; and its forces seem greater than England is likely to be able to resist.

For the Catholic cause Elizabeth's timely death is, if not essential, at any rate much to be desired. To Protestant England her life is invaluable: her marriage to a Protestant most



necessary, so that there may be a Protestant heir. Yet here comes the bewildering feature of the reign. Elizabeth will coquet, but she will not marry. And further, such proposals for marriage as seem even moderately attractive to her, are not at all pleasing to the nation, for she repeatedly seems to intend marriage with a French prince; and he would of course be a Catholic.

Here Elizabeth was wiser than the nation. She saw that the best ally against Spain was France. France, though Catholic, was not of the Catholic Counter-Reformation party. She hated and feared Spain too much to join in that. She was Spain's great rival. Hence for Elizabeth to fish with the bait of a possible marriage was the best way to secure France: so long as Spain feared that she might make a French alliance, Spain would do nothing violent against her that might drive her into it. Once married, her value as a prospective catch would be

The French alliance.

gone. Thus by her coquetting with French princes, Elizabeth kept Spain quiet and France on her side; this friendliness with France lasted all through her reign and proved her great support in acute difficulties; and in the end, of course, the Protestant heir came from Scotland.

Elizabeth's reign, then, is one long struggle against the Counter-Reformation. It is convenient to treat it in four phases.

1. The Scottish phase (1558-68): this covers the first ten years of the reign, and ends with Mary Queen of Scots seeking shelter in England, thus putting herself in Elizabeth's power.
2. The period of Plots (1568-87): these all have the same object—to release Mary, to marry her to some Catholic, and to place her on the throne as Elizabeth's successor. As no successor would be required till Elizabeth was dead, most of the plots included Elizabeth's assassination. The plots end with the execution of Mary (1587). This left nothing to plot about.
3. The Armada (1588): the forces of the Counter-Reformation try at last open war, and fail.
4. The last days of Elizabeth (1589-1603): this sees the war with Spain carried to a successful issue, especially at sea: and with it may be grouped an account of the new maritime spirit,



the exploits of the buccaneers, and the early attempts at colonization—though some of these belong in date to an earlier period.

The Scottish phase comes first. In order to appreciate it a review of Scottish history is needful. Scotland, like England, had a Reformation of a character peculiar to itself. As has been seen, England was the first *considerable* state whose king took up the anti-Roman ideas of the Reformers and made them his state policy. Scotland gave the first example of a country which declared for a Reformation, both in politics and in doctrine, *in defiance of its sovereign*. This unique aspect of the Scottish Reformation makes it particularly important.

## 2. Scotland: the Unlucky House of Stuart

Since the final defeat of Edward I's scheme of annexation England and Scotland had influenced each other but little. They had remained ill neighbours; fighting on the Borders had been almost continuous; Scotland had steadily adhered to its alliance with France; every now and again quarrelling had developed into open wars in which Scotland usually lost the battles. No real progress had been made towards union. Now the time is at hand when the two countries were at last to find a common aim and a common interest in their religion; and while sympathy thus drew them closer, fortune—and Elizabeth's sagacity—gave the chance of the two crowns to join in the person of James I. It is therefore desirable to cast a glance over the policy and social condition of Scotland during these two hundred years of hostility, in order to see how in the end the two nations came together.

Robert Bruce died in 1329, having survived but one year after the Treaty of Northampton. His heart, after its romantic adventure in the good Lord James's keeping, came back to his native land to be buried beneath the high altar at Melrose in that magnificent abbey which seems to embody all that was best of Scottish patriotism, and in its ruin to mourn the disasters which befell Scotland under his successors. And his son David, aged but four years, reigned in his stead.



The purpose of this chapter is not to attempt any continuous account of Scotland under David II and the Stuart kings, but merely to remark what were the general characteristics of the time; to observe, therefore, (1) *the main relations with England*, who, as Scotland's domineering neighbour, was bound to influence her politics most deeply; (2) *the French alliance*, to which Scotland was permanently faithful, on the principle of a common enmity with England; (3) *the elements of disorder at home*, which, in the shape of powerful barons and fierce Highlanders, harassed king after king, and hindered progress in the country. For more than two hundred years invasion from without or rebellion at home tended to paralyse Scotland.

David II's reign saw both invasion and rebellion at work. Edward Balliol, son of John, and the "Disinherited", Scottish nobles who had lost their estates because they had supported England, were tempted to try a stroke to regain their lands when King Robert was gone. They defeated the king's forces at Dupplin Moor, near Perth, in 1332,<sup>1</sup> and Edward Balliol was crowned as a vassal king. Four months later, however, he was driven out of Scotland, and in 1333 Edward III marched north and defeated the Scots at Halidon Hill. The English overran the country; Edward Balliol returned, and the little King David was sent for safety to France. Then, however, Edward became absorbed in French wars; in 1337 Edward Balliol was driven out, and by degrees Scotland regained her lost fortresses.

The constant aim of Edward III's Scottish policy was to break the Franco-Scottish Alliance, for so long as it existed there was always a danger that, while he was fighting in France, the Scots would seize the opportunity to launch an attack against England. Edward III's plan to subjugate Scotland had failed, so now he tried more diplomatic methods—he proposed to the Scots that if they would abandon the French cause, he would restore to them the Lowland counties which had been gifted to him by Balliol in 1334. David II, who had returned from France in 1341, was on the horns of a dilemma, for, no matter what decision he took, he could never feel safe from English aggression. If the English should conquer France, no international agreement would be

<sup>1</sup> See p. 157.



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likely to restrain them from further satisfying their lust for power by attacking Scotland, and if they failed in France they would be sure to turn upon Scotland, if only to restore their military prestige. In the end David decided to stand by France, and in 1346 when Edward III was besieging Calais he led an expedition into England. He was defeated and captured at the battle of Neville's Cross, near Durham, and all the lowland areas which Scotland had recently regained again fell into English hands.

David was a prisoner in England for eleven years, but was released in 1357, his ransom being fixed at 100,000 marks to be paid within ten years. This sum, huge at that time, was a sore burden on Scotland, but Scotland shouldered it—the country could not be free while the king was in captivity. The king himself was not worth one mark, let alone 100,000, and hatred for his uncle and heir, Robert the Steward, led him to propose that an English prince should succeed him. This project was indignantly vetoed by the Scottish Parliament in 1364, and from that time onward, Scottish independence was never again in danger.

Fighting on the Borders went on pretty constantly during the latter half of the fourteenth century, the most picturesque event being the great moonlight affray of Otterburn, in which James, Earl of Douglas, was killed, and the two Percies, Ralph and Henry (Hotspur), made prisoners (1388). But during this time, and under the Lancastrian kings, no serious attempt was made by England to press the conquest of Scotland. The only considerable battle of the time is Homildon (1402), where another Douglas (Archibald, fourth earl), raiding the north, was waylaid by the Percies, who had this time their revenge for Otterburn. The battle had important results in the history of England, for it led up to that great league of Percy, Glendower, Douglas, and Mortimers, which harassed Henry IV; but, save that it once more showed the helplessness of the Scots against English archery, it had no result on Scotland. The Scots clung to their French alliance, and sent men to fight in France against Henry V and Bedford; they helped to win Beaugé (the first turn of the tide, 1422); and Douglas, keeping up his reputation,<sup>1</sup> lost

War:  
Otterburn.  
Homildon.

<sup>1</sup> He was nicknamed the "Tineman" (the *Lose-man*), and justified it by losing the battles of Homildon, Shrewsbury, and Verneuil.



another battle at Verneuil—and his life this time. Stewart of Darnley was killed at the “Battle of the Herrings”, and other Scots fought in the Maid of Orleans’ company. But in Henry VI’s reign England’s hands were too full with French troubles for her to be able to resent these Scottish unfriendlinesses effectively; and then came on the Wars of the Roses, so that till Tudor times Scotland was left mainly to herself. Her internal calamities now call for mention.

David II had died in 1370, leaving no heir, and the crown passed to a grandson of Bruce through his daughter Marjory and her husband, Walter the Steward. This grandson came to the throne as Robert II, and began the line of the unlucky house of Stuart. Six kings descended from him sat on the throne of Scotland. Of these only one (Robert III) had a peaceful end, and he, before his death, saw one of his sons cruelly murdered and the other a prisoner in England. Robert III, too, was the only one to attain old age; none of the others lived to be forty-five; three of them were cut off ere they had entered on the second half of life’s natural span; James I was murdered; James II killed by the bursting of a cannon at the siege of Roxburgh; James III assassinated; James IV killed at Flodden; James V died of a broken heart; his daughter had the worst fate of all, for she perished on the scaffold after nineteen years of captivity. It is a series of disasters unparalleled in history—even in Scotland at a time when “life was short and death was violent”.<sup>1</sup> Yet, unlucky as the kings were, their country was even more so. Not the least misfortune, inevitably following on the premature deaths of the kings, was the constant succession of minorities. James I succeeded at the age of eleven; James II at six; James III at eight; James IV had reached eighteen—a ripe and statesmanlike age compared with that of his ancestors. But James V was not quite two years old when he came to the throne, and his daughter Mary at her accession was aged but one week. So minority followed minority, and regency regency, with every opening for ambition and violence; year after year, and reign after reign, war followed rebellion and rebellion followed war in dreary succes-

The House  
of Stuart.

Misfortunes  
of the house.

<sup>1</sup> Maitland.



sion. Homes burnt, fields ravaged, invasions, defeats, raids from the Highlands, hangings, murders, come one after the other. National independence was a good thing, but no use could be made of it while there was neither order nor firm government. A king could do little for his people so long as his whole resources were being strained to crush the great families into obedience.

Robert III was more or less a cripple, unable to ride about the country, or fight at the head of an army; therefore, for those days, an inefficient king. That he was a kindly <sup>Robert III, 1390-1406.</sup> and charitable man only made the matter worse. The government fell into the hands of his brother, the Duke of Albany, and he, with Douglas (the Tineman), was concerned with the arrest of Robert's eldest son, Rothesay, and probably with his death, which occurred (conveniently) while he was in prison. As the younger son, James, was captured by English vessels while voyaging to France in time of truce in 1406, and Robert III died soon after, Albany had the regency till his death, in 1420. James, however, on his return in <sup>James I, 1406-1437.</sup> 1424, at once struck at the new regent, Murdoch, Duke of Albany, and his two sons. They were executed, and James seized their estates. This stroke was followed up with laws against "bands" (covenants of alliance between nobles), a hanging of disorderly Highland chiefs, the imprisonment of Douglas, and the forfeiture of the earldom of Strathearn. This last proved his undoing, for Sir Robert Graham, heir to Strathearn, hatched a plot in the Highlands to murder the king. The chance soon came. James went to Perth to keep Christmas, and was lodged in the Abbey of Black Friars. On the way north he was warned that he would never return alive, but paid no heed to the warning. Late at night the conspirators "spoiled the locks" and burst noisily in; the king, who was sitting with the queen and her ladies, tore up a plank from the floor and took refuge in a cellar below; there had been an opening from it to the outer end, but the king had just caused it to be walled up to prevent his tennis balls being lost there. Meanwhile, above, the ladies had tried to keep the door, the story being that one of them, Catharine Douglas, thrust her arm



through the staples in place of the bolt. Graham and his followers easily broke in, but not finding the king, were on the point of withdrawing, when the king unluckily made a noise below. Graham leaped down and stabbed him to death.

The next reign, that of James II, saw the culmination and fall of the power of the "Black" Douglasses. As that house played in Scotland somewhat the same part as the family of Neville (the Kingmaker) played in England almost at the same time, it is worth following in a little detail. If the Douglasses were every whit as dangerous, and on occasion treacherous, as the Nevilles, the methods of the Scottish kings in dealing with them were far less scrupulous than those of even Queen Margaret and Edward IV.

James II.  
The Douglas  
family.

James II was a boy of six, and Archibald (fifth earl) was his regent. This earl was unenterprising for a Douglas, and died in 1439 without having distinguished his regency by anything in particular. The Earldom of Douglas, but not the regency, passed to William (sixth earl). This William, a boy of seventeen, was in a position that reminds one of that of Richard Neville the younger. Duke of Touraine, Earl of Douglas, owning land in Scotland right across the Lowlands, able to bring 5000 men of the best fighting quality into the field, himself with a title to the Crown, for he was great-grandson on the female side of Robert III, he was by far the most powerful subject of the King of Scotland. The king's ministers—Crichton the Chancellor, who was Governor of Edinburgh Castle, and Livingstone, the King's Guardian, lately at feud with each other—united to set a trap for Douglas. He and his brother David were invited to Edinburgh Castle to meet the young king. At dinner the Douglas brothers were seized, hurried into the castle-yard, and beheaded (1440).<sup>1</sup>

The leadership of the house of Douglas passed, after a few troubled years, to another William (eighth earl). With this earl, James II, now a boy of thirteen, was at first friends, but quarrels between Douglas, Crichton, Livingstone, and the Earl of Crawford distracted the land. At last James, imitating

<sup>1</sup> This is the occasion on which the famous "black bull's head" (the sign of death) was said to have been placed on the table.



Crichton's violence, invited the Douglas to Stirling, where the two dined and supped together; then the king accused him of being in "a band" with the Earls of Ross and Crawford to rebel, and bade him break the band. Douglas refused, and thereon the king dirked him with his own hand. Patrick Gray, standing by, "made siccar" by dashing out the wounded man's brains with a pole-axe. The ninth Earl—James, brother to the murdered man—naturally fell into rebellion and treason <sup>1452</sup> with Henry VI. He was forgiven for a time, again intrigued with the English and the Highlanders, gathered an army and was overthrown at Arkinholm in Eskdale, and fled to England. So fell the family of the Black Douglas; but the king was not quit of them, for he had won the day only with the help of the younger branch, the Red Douglasses, Earls of Angus. These were to prove as intolerable as the elder branch had been.

In 1460 James II was killed at Roxburgh by the bursting of a bombard. James III being but eight, there followed the usual regency. Kennedy, Bishop of St. Andrews, the <sup>James III, 1460-1488.</sup> one honest and patriotic statesman of the time, who is credited with having given James II the sage illustration of how to deal with his enemies,<sup>1</sup> favoured the Lancastrian cause. Edward IV won over the queen-mother, and allied with the exiled Douglas and some of the Highlanders. So the rebound of the Wars of the Roses led to more fighting in Scotland and on the Borders. When James grew up he quarrelled violently with his two brothers. The elder played the usual traitor's part, made alliance with England, claimed the crown as Edward IV's liegeman, and marched with an English army, led by Richard of Gloucester, into Scotland. James summoned his nobles to his assistance, and they gathered under Archibald Douglas, Earl of Angus. But before fighting the enemy they had a grudge of their own to settle. James, who was a peaceful man, with refined tastes, had made friends with men who had some skill in music and architecture—chief of them Robert Cochrane, a mason—"a person of mean and sober estate", as a chronicler calls him. The nobles hated this favourite, and wished to over-

<sup>1</sup> He gave the king a number of sticks tied in a bundle and told the king to break them. When James failed, Kennedy drew them from the bundle and snapped them *one by one*.



throw him, yet did not see the means to do it. "I will bell the cat," cried Angus to them—hence his nickname, "Archibald Bell-the-cat"—and he kept his word by marching to the king's aid, arresting Cochrane in his tent, and hanging him from Lauder Bridge (1482). James himself was made prisoner and sent to Edinburgh Castle, and Angus and his friends made terms with Albany. Then Albany and Angus quarrelled, and Albany was for a short time reconciled to the king. He soon broke with him, however, and intrigued with England, whither he fled in 1483. In the following year he and the Earl of Douglas led an English force into Dumfriesshire, but it was defeated. Albany escaped to France, where he was killed in 1485. Three years later a new conspiracy was formed against the king by Angus and the southern barons who had in their power the fifteen-year-old Prince James (afterwards James IV). In June, 1488, the king and the northern nobles met and were defeated by the insurgents at Sauchie Burn, near Stirling. James was killed—perhaps murdered—after the battle.

Ominously as James IV's reign had been preluded with the son in arms against the father, it showed for a time promise of better things. The king grew strong, and enforced the law; one curse of Scotland, disorder at home, died down. An alliance made with England by the marriage of James with Margaret Tudor (Henry VII's elder daughter), checked the fighting on the Border; while the Highlands were kept in control by the raising to power of the houses of Campbell (Argyll) and Huntly (Gordon) in the west and east, to act as policemen against "the wild Macraus" of the north. The country prospered, trade increased, and the reign was rightly spoken of as a "golden age". So, till the death of Henry VII, all went well. When Henry VIII succeeded, the royal brothers-in-law began to bicker on personal matters. The old fascinations of the French alliance attracted James, and so, when Henry entered a European league against France, he, like a knight-errant, adventured and lost all at Flodden (1513). It should be noted, however, that the wiser counsellors by no means approved of the expedition. James had a great force; Highlanders under Lennox, Argyll, and



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Huntly; Borderers under Home and Hepburn; Perthshire men with Crawford and Errol—all the chivalry of Scotland was with him. He crossed the Tweed, took some <sup>Flodden,</sup> castles, and pitched on the last southern ridge <sup>1513.</sup> of the Cheviots, at Flodden Edge, a morass in front, his left flank guarded by the deep sluggish Till,<sup>1</sup> and with the Tweed at his rear. Surrey with a strong force, yet less in number than the Scots, kept the Till at first on his left, crossed it at Twizel Bridge, and got in James's rear. James seems to have lost touch with his enemy, and to have thought they were moving on Berwick. Even so the Scots were the better found, the English almost starving and discouraged by having been for three days without beer; and James had the upper ground. The Scottish king was no tactician, however, and finding the enemy in his rear, moved down to meet him, the two armies impinging somewhat at an angle, so that the English right and the Scottish left came first into contact. Here the Scots had the advantage. Home and Huntly broke Edmund Howard and Tunstal, while Dacre, called up from the supports, had much work to stand his ground. Then the centres met in fierce and uncertain combat, James leading a charge against the Percies, who had broken the Perthshire men; the English artillery made great holes in his ranks, while the Scottish guns, which might have been as effective, were not brought into action. On the Scottish right, which came last into action, the English were completely successful. Stanley, with a few archers, harassed Lennox and Argyll's Highlanders into a charge and shattered them. The leaders fell; their men fled headlong. Thus each army had a wing broken, and the fight in the centre was dubious. But while on the Scottish left Home's Borderers had scattered to plunder and, as Fluellen says, "kill the luggage", Stanley kept his men in hand, and pressed in on James's flank. So hemmed in, James and his nobles fought their last fight—the king him-

<sup>1</sup> Says the Tweed to the Till  
 "What gars ye rin so still?"  
 Says the Till to the Tweed  
 "Tho' ye rin wi' speed,  
 And I rin slaw,  
 Yet for ae man ye droon,  
 I droon twa."



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self pierced with arrows and hewn down within a lance's length of Surrey, his nobles pressing forward to cover him, and falling one by one under the sweep of the English bills.

Though the English were so severely stricken that they did not realise until in the morning, when they found that the Scottish forces had gone, that victory was theirs, nevertheless Flodden was for Scotland a shattering blow. High and low alike, from palace, castle, town, and cottage, were stricken there. Surrey's work was done; there was no need to go further; more than a century was to pass ere a Scottish army was again to penetrate into England.

James V's reign was in the main a repetition of the reigns of James II and James III. The internal feuds revived; James V, 1513-1542. the country was distracted between warring houses struggling for the possession of the king. This disorder was increased by the part played by Henry VIII and his ministers, who fostered an "English" party (of traitors) in Scotland, and, further, by the beginnings of the Reformation; obviously, when the Tudor king became the enemy of Rome, the Stuart king clung more closely to the old faith. For the present, merely noting that at first the beginnings of the Reformation tended to widen the gulf between the nations instead of closing it, we may leave the story of the Reformation in Scotland till Mary's reign.

After Flodden the chief persons left to rule Scotland were the queen, Margaret Tudor, Angus (head of the Red Douglas), and Arran (head of the Hamiltons). Within a year the queen married Angus, and henceforth the Douglasses were the English party in Scotland, in constant traitorous correspondence with Henry VIII. How lawless Scotland had become was shown in the affray called "Cleanse the Causeway" in 1520. Angus and Arran were both in Edinburgh, to be present at a meeting of Parliament and to discuss a healing of their quarrel. Each, of course, brought his faction with him; Angus had 400 spearmen at his back. Archbishop Beaton, taking the side of his Hamilton kin, urged the blessings of peace, and in the fervour of his speech smote on the bosom of his vestments; a hollow ring of metal answered the stroke; the archbishop wore a steel corslet beneath,



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"My lord, your conscience clatters," answered Gawain Douglas. Sir Patrick Hamilton also spoke for peace, but another of his name taunted him with cowardice. "I shall fight," answered Sir Patrick, "where thou darest not be seen," and, rushing out, he made an onslaught on Angus's spearmen. Straightway both sides fell to it, and up and down the High Street raged a fierce faction fight, which ended in the complete rout of the Hamiltons.

France was naturally perturbed at the power wielded by the English party, and, in 1515, the Duke of Albany, son of the traitor duke of James III's reign and heir-presumptive to the Scottish Crown, came to Scotland as regent. Margaret and Angus fled to England, but returned a few years later and became bitter enemies. Albany left Scotland in 1524, and the king came under the power of his mother, who had divorced Angus. Then Angus secured the king's person. Walter Scott of Branhholm, and some allies in secret treaty with the king, endeavoured to waylay him at Melrose and rescue him from the Douglas claws, but Angus, helped by Kers and Homes, won the day,<sup>1</sup> and the boy king had to sham gratitude for his preservation. At last, however, he escaped to his mother at Stirling, and rallying to him those who hated the Douglas rule and their treason with England, was able to make himself king in reality.

Angus was driven into exile in England, where he became a pensioner of King Henry, with Henry's instructions "to do all the mischief he could", still plotting to kidnap Archbishop Beaton—an old scheme of Wolsey's—or, better still, King James himself, and hand him over to his English royal uncle, who professed benevolence all the time.

The last fifteen years of the reign were fairly prosperous. On the whole there was peace with England, and this kept treason at home within bounds. James did something to pacify the Borders by clapping the great Border lords in hold, and going round hanging notorious rascals, the chief of them Johnnie Armstrong of Gilnockie. He made a similar tour round the Highlands, established some garrisons, imprisoned some chiefs, and took the Lordship of the Isles for the Crown. There was

<sup>1</sup> It was in the pursuit after this battle that Ker of Cessford was pierced by "dark Elliot's border-spear", as readers of the *Lay of the Last Minstrel* will remember.



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talk of reform of the Church, and the College of Justice was set up in Edinburgh. But though outwardly there was peace with England, Henry and James were not at one; Henry, having severed himself from Rome, desired James to do the like, and break from the Auld Alliance with France. James had no mind to lose his old friend and the support of Rome. Further, his marriage policy vexed Henry. First, he married Madeleine, daughter of Francis I, when Henry had ideas for him to marry his own daughter, Mary. When his first queen died James went again to France and espoused Mary of Guise, whom Henry had his eye on for his own fourth bride. Henry had to content himself with Anne of Cleves—a further source of vexation. Then James refused an interview with his uncle, and gradually the two kings drifted into war. An English raid, with Angus traitorously leading it, was badly beaten in Teviotdale. In reply James mustered his nobles at Fala Muir in 1542, but they refused to follow him in an invasion. Borderers, however, were always ready to fight, and the king collected a mass of them in the West Marches, and at the last moment put them under a friend, Oliver Sinclair, a commoner whom the Scottish nobles disdained to follow. Wharton, the English Warden, had early news of the raid, and advanced with about two thousand **Solway Moss,** men to repel it. While the Scots were discussing **1542.** the point of command, a small body of English horse suddenly attacked. The Scots were caught between the Esk and a morass; unable to deploy, they made a disorderly retreat, which soon turned to a hopeless panic. The rout was complete. The “battle” of Solway Moss was finished before it had begun. All the guns were lost, 1200 men were captured, many more were drowned; the English lost seven men.

The disgrace of it crushed King James. A fortnight later a daughter was born to him. “It came with a lass, and it will go with a lass,” was all he found to say. In a sort of stupor, murmuring at intervals, “Fie, fled Oliver!” the poor king lingered another week, and died at Falkland.

The story of the first five Jameses is tragic, but that Scotland survived through all the internal feuds and recurrent minorities is evidence of how firmly based was the sentiment of essential unity.



and of national independence. But not only did Scotland survive, she also progressed; in the fifteenth century trade increased, the legal system developed, and the three universities of St. Andrews, Glasgow, and Aberdeen were founded, while under the five Jameses a great Scottish literature grew up. James I, Robert Henryson, William Dunbar, Gavin Douglas, Sir David Lyndsay, are the outstanding names of the "Golden Age of Scottish Poetry".

### 3. The Reformation in Scotland

The first fact to be borne in mind about the Reformation in Scotland is this: it stopped the weak spot in England's defences, and this at a time of England's greatest danger.

Scotland had always been an ally of France, and a <sup>Results of the Reformation in Scotland.</sup> Catholic Scotland would have been, in Elizabeth's

reign, a base from which the Counter-Reformation could strike. Imagine England's danger if Napoleon had been able to use a friendly Scotland as his base. Yet the danger would hardly have been greater in George III's reign than it was in Elizabeth's. A Reformed Scotland gave the enemy no opening for dealing a stab in the back.

Secondly, it led to the union of two relatively small powers into one big one. To the European diplomatist of the early sixteenth century England was a second-rate <sup>Union of the island.</sup> power, mostly following the lead of Spain; Scotland a hanger-on of France. Thanks to the Reformation in Scotland and to the statesmanship of Elizabeth, the two were united in one Protestant power of first-rate importance—a fact of incalculable consequence in Europe; and for the first time Britain reaped the full value of being an island.

Thirdly, Scotland gave the first example of a country making a successful Reformation in defiance of its rulers. It was the first "popular" reformation, as opposed to royal or political reformations.

These are great happenings; yet one is tempted at first to say they are inevitable. Each of the two countries has a Reformation at the same time; it is only natural that the Reformers join in self-defence. So far from this being inevitable, it was at first exceedingly unlikely. Not only were the two nations bitter



foes, but they had everything to keep them apart; and their Reformations were totally different in character. Henry VIII would have treated the Scottish Reformers as rebels. They, looking on themselves as the sons of the prophets, would have regarded him as Ahab and Nebuchadnezzar combined in one corpulent monster.

Between the affray at Solway Moss in 1542 and Queen Mary's crossing of the Solway to take refuge in England lie twenty-six years; another nineteen years take us to the end of the tragedy at Fotheringhay Castle. So was spanned the life of Mary Stuart. It is in the first part, however, that the great events occur. In it the Scottish Reformation was secured, with the heir to the throne in the hands of the Reformers; in it England and Scotland learnt to face the common enemy, the Counter-Reformation, together; warfare between the two neighbours came to an end; Elizabeth's support saved the Scottish Reformation; the Scottish Reformers in return steadied Elizabeth's throne when it tottered.

In England the king had taken up the Reformation to suit himself, and shaped it to his own political purposes. The Scottish Reformation had in its beginning nothing to do with politics, nor could it be led by the king. James V relied upon his clergy, upon France, upon the Pope, for his nobles were already turning greedy eyes on the vast wealth of the Church. To side with the Reformers meant to break with all of these ancient allies, and the king could not face that. The Reformation in Scotland, then, was based upon criticism, upon the need of reform in the Church, upon the temper of the Scottish people. As there was in the Church much to criticize, and as the temper of the people took readily to theological and religious discussion, especially basing its judgments on its own interpretation of the Bible, there was fertile soil for the Reformers to work on.

The Church in Scotland was rich, but much of the wealth was not used for Church purposes. The bishops were far more nobles than ecclesiastics—warlike, greedy for wealth, and worldly-minded. They were often the younger sons of great families, who used their position

**Peculiarities  
of the Scottish  
Reformation.**

**The Church  
in Scotland,  
1500.**



to plunder the Church for their own house. They fought among themselves—James Beaton, Archbishop of St. Andrews, having ordered the Prior of St. Andrews to mend his immoral life, the Prior—who belonged to the wildest of all Lowland families, the Hepburns—retaliated by arming his retainers and threatening war on the archbishop. Beaton, of the “clattering conscience”, was not the only one who wore a breastplate. The common clergy were poor, and ignorant, and ill-behaved; “dumb dogs” who did not preach—“drunken Sir John Latinless”, is Sir David Lyndsay’s name for them. The exactions found so burdensome in England were even more oppressive in Scotland. The “corse presents” (mortuary fees), the taking of the “best cloth” and a cow from the family of the dead, pressed hardly on the poor. Marriage, too, in a small country where family relationship spread so widely, offered another point where the influence of the Church was oppressive. The prohibited degrees of cousinship came in so often that dispensations had perpetually to be obtained; and dispensations were not to be had without fees. Finally, the morals of the churchmen were openly and notoriously bad. In no country was the rule that the clergy must remain celibate more openly defied. Over and over again come the records of priests’ children being made legitimate, and no steps were taken to check the loose morality. Proposals for reform were made, orders issued, and so forth, but nothing was done.

Meanwhile the influence and writings of the German Reformers reached Scotland; translations of the Scriptures became common; Parliament and the Church tried to crush the new opinions, and in 1528 Patrick Hamilton, who had travelled in Germany and picked up the ideas of the time, was tried for heresy and burnt. “The reek of Mr. Patrick”, however, did not deter others, and George Wishart, another who had learnt the new doctrines abroad, returned to Scotland in 1543, and began preaching, at first in Dundee, and after in Ayrshire. His quarrels with the clergy grew, and Cardinal Beaton had him arrested, tried, and put to death at St. Andrews. Three months later Wishart was revenged; a gang of Beaton’s enemies—Leslie, Melville, and the Kirkaldys

Murder of  
Cardinal  
Beaton.



—slipped into the castle and stabbed him in his chair. His body was hung over the walls for the townsfolk to gaze at, just where, three months before, he had looked on at May, 1546. Wishart's execution. The murderers held out in the castle for more than a year. At length some French ships came to help the besiegers; then the "Castilians" surrendered, and were banished to the French galleys; with them went a man, after to be famous; a minister, "an earnest professor in Christ Jesus", a friend of Wishart, who had entered the castle during the Easter truce, and had been preacher to this band of godly murderers. This man was John Knox.

In 1547 Henry VIII died, and Somerset's policy was for a match between his young king and the child Mary Stuart; but, as has been seen, the battle of Pinkie shattered that hope. Mary was sent to France—England and Scotland being bitter enemies—and the Reform party in Scotland was checked. England was the only place whence the Reformers could get help, yet to ask for English help was to play the traitor. Edward VI, however, welcomed Scottish Protestants at his court, and procured the release of John Knox from the French galleys.

Mary Tudor's accession, however, gave another shift to the wheel; with England once more Catholic, the Reformers of the two countries, each party downtrodden and persecuted, Knox. began to draw together. Knox came back to Scotland with some knowledge of Englishmen and their ways. After his release from the galleys in 1549 he had been Edward VI's chaplain, and had been offered a bishopric, prudently refusing it as he foresaw "evil days to come". The Roman Catholic Church in Scotland had failed to reform itself from within, but Knox found the time not yet ripe, and retired again. But the cause went on. Some powerful nobles—Glencairn, Argyll, Morton, and Erskine—united in a "band" to establish the "Word of God and his Congregation" against "wicked power that does intend tyranny". In 1557 the image of St. Giles, patron saint of the Mother Kirk of Edinburgh, was stolen and burnt; the next year the procession was rabbled in the street. Thus the people and a strong party of nobles had declared for the Reformers; the clergy had nothing to rely on but the Crown



and the French alliance. But that at any rate seemed firm, for in April, 1558, Mary Queen of Scots had married Francis, Dauphin of France, and (though it was not known in Scotland at the time) her husband was to be no mere king-consort; she had assigned to him, in the event of her death without issue, the throne of Scotland and her claims on England. Now at length it appeared certain that Scotland and France, so long allied, would be definitely united, with Scotland practically a province of France; and if so, the cause of the Reformers was lost.

#### 4. Scotland and Elizabeth

Such, then, was the situation when Elizabeth came to the throne. Mary had been six months married to the Dauphin, but was still in France; her mother, Mary of Guise, <sup>Elizabeth</sup> was regent in Scotland, keeping down, with some <sup>and Scotland.</sup> difficulty, the Reforming party headed by the "Lords of the Congregation", as Glencairn and the other Protestant nobles styled themselves. If Elizabeth was to secure Scotland she must support the Reformers; yet to do so was obnoxious, for two strong reasons. It would offend France, and she could not afford to quarrel with France as well as Spain; besides, she detested helping rebels, and it would be a dangerous precedent: it would be only too painfully easy for France to help rebels in England against her. And further, Knox, in the fullness of his zeal, had just issued his famous *First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women*. It was directed against the three Maries,<sup>1</sup> all Catholics, and all, to Knox's mind, abominable. That the fate of England and Scotland should hang at this critical time upon a succession of queens, all marriageable, and all therefore potentially dangerous, in so much that their marriages might entangle their realms in all kinds of calamities, has always been a fact dwelt on by historians as most singular; and it moved Knox—an outspoken man—to more than his usual plainness of language. It was peculiarly unlucky that the *Blast*, intended to wither the

<sup>1</sup> Mary Tudor, Mary Stuart, and Mary of Guise. Knox uses the word *Regiment* to mean Rule or Government.



Catholic Mary Tudor, should deafen her Protestant sister on her accession. It gave Elizabeth great offence, and she refused to let Knox pass through England, and would have nothing to do with him.

No two years contain so many events as 1559-60. Knox came back to Scotland, and put heart into the Reformers. "The voice of that one man is able in an hour to put more life into us than six hundred trumpets continually blustering in our ears," said one who knew him. His supreme quality was his fearlessness; the words spoken by Morton at his grave tell the naked truth: "Here lies one who never feared the face of man". Already the preachers and the Lords of the Congregation were at odds with the regent. A conference was invited at Perth, and both factions gathered; each suspected the other of treachery.

The sermon  
at Perth.

On May 11 Knox preached a sermon against idolatry, and the mob suited the action to the words by attacking and destroying the monasteries and religious houses in the city. The spirit of destruction, which must be regretted, spread to St. Andrews, Stirling, Dundee, Edinburgh, and over the country. "Burn the nests," cried Knox, "and the rooks will fly." Soon the Lords of the Congregation were in arms, and masters of Edinburgh. Most of the nobility had joined them; the Second Prayer Book of Edward VI was appointed for use in the churches, and the property of the plundered abbeys was to be "bestowed upon the faithful ministers". Needless to say, they did not get it; the great nobles intercepted most of it.

Faced with this rebellion, the regent looked for help to France. Here, too, momentous events had occurred; peace had been made between France and Spain at Cateau Cambrésis—an ill omen for Elizabeth, whose interest lay in their mutual enmity—and then, in the tournament held to celebrate the treaty, Henry II met with a fatal accident, so that Francis, Mary's husband, now became king of France. In July a French expedition to Scotland was preparing, and the Reformers appealed to Elizabeth. She refused to help, though she secretly sent some money.<sup>1</sup> For the time she waited to see how it would fare between the Lords of the Congregation and the regent,

<sup>1</sup> Bothwell robbed the messenger who carried it



backed by the French. The French held Leith, and the Reformers could not dislodge them. An assault was beaten off, and the French occupied Stirling. The cause of Reform was almost lost when Elizabeth at last acted. She sent a squadron of ships under Winter to the Firth of Forth; so secretly had she acted that none knew at first in whose cause they came; but the action was decisive; to blockade Leith meant that the French would receive no more reinforcements (December, 1559).

Elizabeth  
helps the  
Reformers.

The credit of winning Elizabeth to this momentous step was due in the main to Maitland of Lethington. It was probably he who had persuaded the Reformers to drop the cry of "Religion" and unite on the more patriotic demand for the expulsion of the French and the regent. He went as envoy to confer with Elizabeth in November. Lethington was a statesman far in advance of his time. "The mark I always shoot at," he wrote, "is the union of England and Scotland in perpetual friendship." The first proof of his marksmanship was the sailing of Winter's fleet. It was followed by a treaty between Elizabeth and the Lords of the Congregation against Mary of Guise in February; an English army entered Scotland in April. Leith was besieged by English and Scots fighting side by side. In June the regent died. A month later the French surrendered, and were removed from Scotland; and the English departed too, leaving behind them, for the first time in the history of the two nations, gratitude instead of hatred. No advantage had been sought; not a word had been said of the old obnoxious claim of suzerainty. Elizabeth had played fair, when fairness was masterly, and had won. The Reformation in Scotland was safe (though this was not what she had played for), and she was safe too in having a Protestant Scotland over her borders. And here fortune came in to aid her. In December, 1560, Francis II died; and Mary Stuart was no longer wife of the King of France; she was but a childless widow, Queen of Scots.

Treaty of  
Leith,  
July, 1560.

In August, 1560, a Scottish Parliament sanctioned the establishment of the Reformed Church. Papal authority was abolished, the Protestant faith alone was recognized, the



exercise of the mass and of Roman Catholic rites in general was forbidden under heavy penalties.

## 5. Mary Stuart

In August, 1561, Mary came home to her realm—and to her ruin. “Was never seen a more dolorous face of the heaven . . . that forewarning God gave unto us,” said Knox.

Mary Queen  
of Scots in  
Scotland.

It is hard to realize the pathetic tragedy of Mary's return. She was only nineteen; she had hitherto lived a happy life in a highly-civilized country, first as a princess, then as Queen of France. Suddenly her husband had died, and she, childless, had to leave France and return to Scotland—a bewildering change. Scotland, in comfort, civilization, and manners, was far behind France. If one wants an example one has only to think of the Château of Amboise and the Towers of Holyroodhouse, the one light, graceful, looking out over smiling river and countryside, perhaps the most charming “great house” in a land always supreme in great houses, the other low-lying and squat, dark and gloomy, with slits for windows carved in the great depths of walls which must always have suggested a dungeon rather than a palace. At her homecoming Mary received a warm and enthusiastic welcome from her subjects, rejoiced to have their queen of the ancient royal house of Stuart back to reign over them. But cordial relations could not long endure between a sincerely Catholic queen, who loved France first and Scotland only second, and a sternly Protestant people and nobility. Mary's first mass at Holyroodhouse was, though private, interrupted by brawlers clamouring at the door to put the priest to death. Knox, in his first interview with her, called her Church by a foul name. On her entering Edinburgh she was presented with a huge Bible—a fairly plain hint—and a number of children were set up to make a speech to her “concerning the putting away of the mass”. In fact, every preacher of the Reformed doctrines in Scotland thought it his duty to check and exhort his queen. The nobles were hardly better. Bothwell (probably) was plotting to murder her in her first year. Even Huntly, the chief of the Catholics, intrigued with the Hamiltons, and compelled the queen



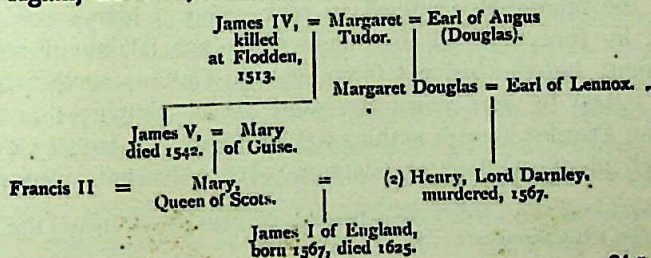
to fight against him till his death after a skirmish with the royal troops. Few there were who offered Mary faithful service.

Yet she was not powerless. She had her beauty and her astuteness. "If there be not in her a crafty wit," says Knox, "my judgment faileth me." Further, she was heir to the English throne, though Elizabeth would not recognize her title. Finally, she had another weapon: she could marry again.

It was recognized that inevitably she would do so, and all the politicians in England, Scotland, and on the Continent occupied themselves with matchmaking. There were rumours of everything—she would marry the King of Denmark or of Sweden; a son of the Emperor; Don Carlos; a French prince; even Philip II himself. Elizabeth pressed the choice of her own favourite noble, the Earl of Leicester. Mary pretended to consider this, but secretly made her own choice; and her choice fell on her cousin, Henry Lord Darnley.

One thing was to be said for this match; it did not entangle Scotland with either France or Spain; perhaps it may have commended itself to Elizabeth in this way, for though she opposed it she did not try to prevent it, as she might have done. She let Darnley go from England to Scotland. Yet it had dangers too, for Darnley was of Tudor blood, and thus the marriage joined two Tudor lines of claim to the English throne. Both Mary and Darnley were grandchildren of Margaret Tudor (Henry VIII's sister), who had married James IV. Thus, "if anything should happen to Elizabeth"—which, being translated by plotters, signified "were she assassinated"—Mary and Darnley's joint claim to the throne would be almost irresistible; and this would mean a Catholic on the throne of England.

Again, however, Elizabeth's troubles were smoothed out by





the misfortunes of her rivals. Mary soon quarrelled with Darnley. He was vicious and empty-headed, and she got no help from him. She refused him the crown-matrimonial, <sup>Plots.</sup> and he was much affronted by her refusal. So he allied himself with some of the Protestant nobles, who joined him in a plot. The murder of Mary's Italian secretary, Rizzio, was to be the first item; how much further the plotters were to go none knows; probably the seizing of Mary and the crown for Darnley lay at the back of it. Mary had only Bothwell and the new Earl of Huntly faithful to her; against her many: the Douglas brood, Ruthven and Morton; nobles full of hate for an Italian upstart; Lethington, now left in the cold and jealous; Lennox, angered that his son was slighted over the crown; and her despicable husband screwing his courage up with much liquor. The conspirators signed a band<sup>1</sup> to support Darnley; he was to hold them quit of consequences "for whatsoever crime", and they were to have their religion established "conform to Christ's Book". The compost of crime and conscience is edifying.

On the evening of March 12 Darnley came into Mary's room at Holyroodhouse; behind, Ruthven, Morton, and other plotters; Rizzio clung pitifully to Mary's skirt. There was a <sup>Holyrood, 1566.</sup> scuffle in which the supper-table fell, and Rizzio was dragged out, and dispatched by many stabs; the body was thrown down the stairs, Darnley's dagger, which had been used by George Douglas, sticking in it.

No political murder is more stamped with horror; nothing is more amazing than the skill with which Mary got the better of the murderers. In two days she had won over Darnley, had spoken of amnesty, and had persuaded him to escape with her to Dunbar. Her friends joined her; Bothwell brought in men, and the murderers scattered to seek safety. Mary's son was born in June, and all the summer she was talking of reconciliation; but she had not forgotten. In October another band was signed by very much the same set of plotters, this time against Darnley, though nothing was specified. In January, 1567, he fell ill of smallpox at Glasgow. When he was recovering,

<sup>1</sup> The plot was very widely known. Randolph, the English envoy, reported it to Cecil three days before the murder.



Mary visited him and brought him back with her to the Kirk-o'-Field, an old monastic house just outside Edinburgh. Here she visited him, going there for the last time on February 9; while she was sitting with him upstairs, Bothwell and some helpers were carrying in gunpowder into the room beneath Darnley's. Bothwell then fetched the queen, rode back with her to a masque at Holyroodhouse, and later rode down again to Kirk-o'-Field. About 2 on the morning of February 10 Kirk-o'-Field was blown into the air. The bodies of Darnley and his page were found in the garden with no marks of powder on them. They had been strangled.

Bothwell's guilt is certain. How much Mary knew of the plot has remained one of the puzzles of history. None at the time doubted that she knew, and the whole train of events makes it hard to doubt now. But too many were in the plot to have it dragged into day. An inquiry was made and abandoned; Bothwell was "cleansed". Then came another thunderstroke. Late in April Mary was seized by Bothwell, no doubt with her consent, and carried off to Dunbar; Bothwell secured a hasty divorce from his wife; in a fortnight Mary and Bothwell re-entered Edinburgh together; on May 15 they were married. Even on her wedding-day Mary's brief infatuation for the ruffian was waning. She was

Marriage of  
Mary and  
Bothwell.

heard to say that she longed to die. She was, however, still a long way from the end of her misfortunes. The next event was the gathering of the Lords of the North against Bothwell. The forces met at Carberry Hill, close to Pinkie; Bothwell's men deserted, and he escaped; but Mary was captured, brought into Edinburgh in her short red skirt, jeered at by the mob, and at last sent off to her prison on the island in Lochleven. Immediately after, the silver casket holding the famous "Casket Letters" was captured from a retainer of Bothwell's who had been sent to remove some of Bothwell's property from Edinburgh Castle. These letters, if genuine, would prove that Mary was privy to Darnley's murder and had consented to Bothwell's abduction of her. They were, therefore, the very piece of evidence which her enemies lacked to justify her imprisonment *without involving their own guilt*. It is certainly suspicious that they secured it



so very promptly; and there is much else to indicate that some parts of the letters were forged and tampered with. But Mary never had the chance to disprove them.

When Mary was in prison Elizabeth began to bestir herself a little on her behalf. She wrote to forbid the Lords to do her any injury, and to suggest that the little Prince James, her son, should be sent to England. There was talk of putting Mary to trial for her life, but in the end it was arranged that she should abdicate in favour of her son, and that her half-brother, Murray, should be regent. She entrusted to him her jewels; he sold some to Elizabeth.

Robbed of her jewels, her son, her throne, her liberty, Mary still had her beauty; she won over her jailor, George Douglas; the keys of Lochleven Castle were stolen, and Mary rode off wildly to join her last friends, the Hamiltons. Murray gathered the Protestant Lords, and routed the Hamiltons at Langside.

Mary's flight  
to England,  
1568.

Her last hope in Scotland gone, Mary fled in haste to the Solway, and two days after the battle crossed into England. She wrote to Elizabeth: "It is my earnest request that your Majesty will send for me as soon as possible, for my condition is pitiable, not to say for a queen, but even for a simple gentlewoman". Pity, however, was not the motive most likely to guide Elizabeth.

Mary expected that either Elizabeth would help her, or that she would let her pass from England to seek aid in France or elsewhere. Elizabeth talked of restoring her to Scotland, or at all events of making terms with her enemies—but first she must be convinced that Mary was not guilty. It was the hope that she would get Elizabeth's help that induced Mary to submit to an inquiry at all. But from the first Elizabeth's mind was made up not to let her escape. So Mary was brought from Carlisle to Bolton Castle in Yorkshire, where she was out of reach of a rescue. An inquiry was held. Norfolk, the chief English Catholic noble, Sussex, and Sadler were to meet Murray, Morton, and the Scots envoys. But Mary was never allowed to see the evidence against her, nor to have an interview with Elizabeth; she had no justice given her. Morton, the chief witness against her, had been leader in the plot to murder Rizzio, and privy to Darnley's



taking off.<sup>1</sup> He was far more guilty than the queen. But Elizabeth did not want a decision; if Mary was innocent, she must be released; if guilty, punished. Both courses were desperately inconvenient, so Elizabeth preferred to keep her a prisoner—neither guilty nor acquitted—with the shadow over her.

## 6. The Period of Plots, 1568–87

So passed away the immediate peril of a hostile queen in Scotland who was a Catholic, marriageable, exceedingly attractive, and heir to Elizabeth's throne. Mary was a prisoner, and the Reformation, established by the Scottish Parliament in 1560, was safe: that gateway of <sup>Elizabeth's improved position.</sup> attack was blocked to France or Spain. This meant much in the way of security. But in the ten years from 1558 to 1568 other things had happened to help Elizabeth. Not only was she stronger, but her enemies had grown weaker. The wars of religion had burst out in France. At the head of the extreme Catholic party there was the house of Guise, and the Guises set up a claim to the throne. As a safeguard against the Guises the kings of France sought Elizabeth's friendship, and this friendship was maintained; it survived even the shock of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew. One prop to the alliance Elizabeth furnished by her marriage policy; she "considered" a proposal to marry a French royal prince, Anjou. True, she was not in earnest; privately she alluded to her suggested bridegroom as her "Frog"; but an appearance of negotiation was kept up. So France, severed from Scotland, distracted by religious wars and by the ambitions of the Guises, who in their turn were backed by Spain, was perforce friendly to Elizabeth.

Spain, too, was less strong, also on account of a religious war. The Low Countries, her richest province, were in rebellion; and the rebellion proved unexpectedly hard to crush. Through Elizabeth's reign the struggle went on, and it gradually sapped

<sup>1</sup> Bothwell had tried to enlist him in the plot, but he had refused to join without Mary's signed warrant, which Bothwell could not get. His first cousin, Archibald Douglas, was present at the explosion, and Morton knew he was going there.



the Spanish power. This gave Elizabeth another vantage-ground. She might aid the rebels; true, she was not likely to do it, for that would provoke a war with Spain. But she could hint at doing it; and Spain would be cautious not to act vigorously against her, for fear that she might retaliate by helping the Dutch rebels.

Thus these ten years had seen Elizabeth's place on the throne grow much firmer. Her people were loyal; her settlement of the Church was winning its way; her enemies were occupied at home. Still, she was not yet out of the wood. Mary was her captive, but there would be schemes to release her and marry her. This would have to be done secretly, hence the next phase—the "period of plots".

What was coming was foreshadowed at that inquiry held over Mary in 1569. Norfolk, Elizabeth's chief commissioner, was at first convinced of Mary's guilt. Then he changed his mind, and began to scheme to marry Mary. As he was the chief English Catholic, such a marriage would have pleased the Catholic party. It might even have produced a Catholic heir to the throne, for nothing was yet settled about the succession. But Elizabeth's ministers were vigilant, and well served by their spies. The plan was revealed; the inquiry was closed; and Mary was sent off, half-guest, half-prisoner, to Tutbury.

The next step was more formidable. Norfolk and his friends intrigued with the Duke of Alva, the Spanish commander in the Netherlands. They promised to head a rising and arrest Cecil, Elizabeth's chief minister; Alva was to furnish troops; Mary was to be released. Alva refused to send his men before the rebels showed themselves to be in earnest, and Elizabeth's ministers were again too quick and too well-informed. Orders were given to arrest the most dangerous plotters, the Earls of Northumberland and Westmorland. How dangerous these two were their names bear witness. Percy and Neville were the two great fighting names in the north; and the north was still used to arms, and warlike. The earls called out their border forces, seized Durham, and had the mass sung in its cathedral; then hurried southward to capture Mary. But Mary was taken to Coventry, and the queen's forces barred the

The Rising in  
the North.



earls' march in the West Riding. There was no fighting; the leaders escaped to Scotland; the rebels scattered; many were caught and hanged in the towns and villages of Durham and Yorkshire; there was need of a sharp lesson. So ended the Rising in the North. It is worth note that while the earls wished their cause to appear to be the Catholic cause, and made show that they were fighting for their faith, Elizabeth took pains to display them as merely rebels. As if expressly to destroy their claim to be the Catholic party in arms for the Catholic cause, she sent against them a Catholic as commander, the Earl of Sussex.

Up till now, indeed, it was not clear that in the end Elizabeth might not return to the Church of Rome. The "English heresy", as it was regarded by the Catholic party, had lasted long, but they trusted that it would be overcome in time; it was hardly conceivable that Elizabeth would persist in a cause that seemed to sever her from all other European monarchs. Consequently the Papacy had been long-suffering, affording her leisure for repentance. Now, however, it seemed time to remind her that her attitude could no longer be tolerated, and in 1570 Pius V declared her excommunicate, and her subjects released from the duty of obeying her. This, it is true, need not mean a final breach—excommunication could be revoked—but it made it clear that Rome regarded her for the time as an enemy, and expected Catholics who were true to their faith to take part against her.

The excommunication.

Hence came a fresh outburst of plots, both from at home and abroad.

A few fervent Catholics in England, and enthusiasts in Spain, France, and Italy, all began to see that to dethrone Elizabeth was their duty. First came the Ridolfi plot (1571). This Ridolfi, a Florentine banker, was in the confidence of the Pope, and employed as an agent between Norfolk, Mary Queen of Scots, and Philip of Spain. Alva was asked to send help from the Netherlands; he, however, answered, with caution, that he was doubtful of success unless Elizabeth should first die a natural death, "or any other death". Eventually the plot leaked out through Burleigh's spies; Norfolk was arrested, and put to death.

Ridolfi's plot



A brief period of comparative calm followed. By the Treaty of Blois, France had agreed not to support Mary's cause in Scotland, and Elizabeth and the French Court managed to keep friends in spite of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew (Aug., 1572). The rebels in the Netherlands proved stubborn and kept Spain occupied; and even when Don John had nearly subdued them, and was planning to invade England and marry Mary himself, Philip was so much alarmed at his half-brother's ambitious plans that he recalled him.

The next trouble came from the Jesuits. Since its foundation, in 1540, by Ignatius Loyola, this order had produced the leaders in the struggle to win back the peoples that had adopted the teaching of the Reformation. In 1568 a school for English Jesuits was set up at Douai—moved ten years later to Rheims—on purpose to train a band of missionaries to reconvert England. Such persons came to England at the risk of their lives: one, Cuthbert Mayne, was executed in 1577. A fresh campaign began in 1580, with the arrival of Campion and Parsons. Nominally they did not meddle in questions of state, but their teaching had a marvellous influence in reviving Catholic hopes throughout England, and the Government caused Campion and several of his companions to be arrested, tried for treasonable plotting, and executed. There was little evidence against Campion, but his comrade, Parsons, who escaped, showed by his subsequent career that he certainly did meddle in questions of state. He sent two Jesuit companions into Scotland to stir up a rising in Mary's cause; he plotted with Mendoza, the Spanish envoy in London; he colloqued with Philip and the Pope, and planned Elizabeth's murder. But the English assassin, who was to kill the queen for a reward of 100,000 francs, was, as Parsons regretted, "a worthless fellow, who would do nothing". Parsons was also thick in the plot for a Spanish invasion, which was got up by Mendoza and a Cheshire gentleman named Francis Throckmorton. Again Burleigh and Walsingham were well-informed; Throckmorton was arrested (December, 1583) and executed, and Mendoza dismissed.

So far Elizabeth had seemed to bear a charmed life; the great

The Jesuits  
Campion  
and Parsons.

Throck-  
morton's  
plot.



bulk of her people were enthusiastically loyal; the plotters half-hearted and inefficient. But in 1584 came a thunderstroke of politics—so-called—to show that plots did not always miscarry. William the Silent, Prince of Orange, the heart and centre of the rebellion in the Netherlands, was shot by an assassin in Spanish pay<sup>1</sup>, Balthasar Gérard. Just at the same time Anjou's death made it clear that the crown of France would go, after Henry III's death, to Henry of Navarre, who was a Protestant. The prospect of being ruled by a heretic was, to many French Catholics, unbearable; and forthwith civil war broke out in France. This was disastrous for Elizabeth. Not only would she get no help from France, if she needed it, against a Spanish invasion—now far more probable since William of Orange was gone, and the Spanish troops under Parma were triumphant in the Netherlands—but, what was worse, the Catholic party in France, alarmed at the prospect of a Huguenot on the throne, were inviting help from Spain. If, as seemed likely, France and Spain were to unite in a Catholic league, Elizabeth and the cause of England would be lost. The dagger or a pistol-shot; a swarming over of Spanish troops; the Inquisition, the faggot, and the stake; and the downfall of all Englishmen held dear—such was the prospect of the black years following 1584.

England made what reply she could. Twelve years before, Parliament had petitioned for Mary's attainder, but Elizabeth would not permit it. In the peril of 1584 an Association was formed, the members of which undertook to prosecute to the death anyone plotting the queen's death, and also *any person in whose favour such an attempt was made*. Parliament followed this up with an act which provided that if such a plot were formed with the "privity" of any person pretending a title to the throne, that person could be tried for treason by royal commission. This might not secure Elizabeth from the assassin, but, if she died, Mary would never succeed to the throne. Her life would be forfeit, in any case. Elizabeth followed this up by an alliance with James VI for mutual defence of their religion, and by sending Leicester with an army to aid

<sup>1</sup> Parma had *promised* him pay. He was, however, penniless; a gift from William himself, in reward for a piece of news, provided the money to buy the pistols.



the Dutch. Little came of it save the battle of Zutphen, wherein the chivalrous Sir Philip Sidney was mortally wounded.

So stood affairs at the beginning of the year 1586. In May Walsingham intercepted a letter from Mary to Mendoza, in which she disinherited her son James, and made over all her claims to Philip of Spain. This, however, was only the beginning. Another plot was brewing. Savage, an English officer serving with Parma, took an oath that he would murder Elizabeth. Mendoza, now ambassador in France, suggested that Cecil and Walsingham had best be killed also. The English agent for the plot was Antony Babington, a Catholic attached to Elizabeth's court, who found five other assassins to join Savage. Walsingham's chief spy, however, had wormed himself into the secret. The letters between Mary and the plotters were intercepted, deciphered, copied, and forwarded, and so the plot grew under Walsingham's fingers. The object was to be sure of Mary's "privity" to the scheme to murder; that once established, nothing could save her. At last, in July, she wrote: "Affairs being thus prepared, then shall it be time to *set the six gentlemen at work*". That was enough. Mary's papers were seized, and she was tried before commissioners at Fotheringay.

Mary's execution, 1587. Inevitably she was found guilty; Parliament petitioned for her immediate execution. Elizabeth hesitated; to put Mary to death was to change the whole face of politics, to embark on all kinds of new dangers. But Parliament and the Privy Council were determined on Mary's death, and the warrant for her execution was sent by the Privy Council to Fotheringay; and in February, 1587, Mary was beheaded.

So ended the period of plots with the death of the unhappy woman in whose favour they were made. If Spain was to do anything now, it must be by invasion; the enemy who had fought behind the covert of secrecy and conspiracy must now come into the open.



## 7. The Armada

Since the days of Henry VII a spirit of adventure had sent Englishmen, particularly from the western ports of Plymouth, Bideford, and Bristol, out into the great waters. To explore, to find gold, to trade, and, it may be added, to plunder, were the objects. So went Chancellor to Archangel; Willoughby to the North-east Passage, and to his death, in 1554; Frobisher to Labrador; Davis to the North-west Arctic. Such northern adventures were all attempts to find an English route to the East; the existing roads round the Cape of Good Hope or the Horn were already seized on; they belonged to Portugal and to Spain. The North proved unkindly and inaccessible, however, and there were no inhabitants to buy the cloth which the Englishmen hoped to sell in cold latitudes. Hence the diversion to the warmer latitudes, in particular to the Spanish Main. Spain resented the coming of English ships, and all our trading there had a suspicion of contraband about it, and even a taste of piracy now and again. But the maxim ran, "No peace beyond the line",<sup>1</sup> and though there was often fighting in the Spanish Main, at home Spain, though sorely tried, had kept up a sort of peace with England. The provocation she swallowed was amazing. In a sense she began the violence in the treacherous attack on Sir John Hawkins's flotilla at San Juan in 1568; but Hawkins had no business there, and was meaning to force a sale of the slaves he was carrying. He lost four ships—one of them belonging to the queen—and goods to the value of £100,000; and he and his companion, Francis Drake, barely escaping with their lives, came back angry and revengeful. In 1572 came Drake's attack on Nombre de Dios, his capture of the mule-train loaded with silver, and his first vision of the Pacific. In 1577 he sailed with five ships, the chief being the *Golden Hind*, through Magellan's Straits, fell on the unprotected Spanish towns on the Pacific coast, plundered them, and then crossed the ocean to Java, and so home round

The Adventurers  
and the  
Buccaneers.

<sup>1</sup> The line drawn by Pope Alexander VI, 300 miles west of the Azores, to separate the colonial spheres of Portugal (east) and Spain (west).



the world, bringing back treasure valued at £800,000. For this exploit the queen knighted him on board the *Golden Hind* at Deptford; so substantial a contribution as £800,000 to what may be called the party funds deserved a knighthood. Even so, though Spain remonstrated angrily, no war followed. Each country laid an embargo on the other's vessels in 1585, and the queen sent Drake off again to plunder the Spanish West Indies. Yet even now only two royal ships went; it was a sort of joint-stock piracy; the rest were merchantmen from London and the West and private venturers, some thirty in all. This flotilla pillaged the Spanish islands, sacked Santiago in the Cape Verde, Domingo, and Carthagena, plundering, burning, and holding to ransom, and returned unscathed. The profit was poor,<sup>1</sup> but the damage done enormous.

This raid on the West Indies decided Philip at last. His generals in the Netherlands urged an invasion of England as easy; Spain could collect a huge fleet; and, finally,  
**The Armada.** Mary's death, in 1587, made it clear that if the enterprise succeeded it was Philip in person who would profit by it. So the preparations, hitherto lukewarm, were pressed forward, and the Armada would have sailed in 1587, had not Drake's "singeing of the King of Spain's beard"—his attack on the shipping in Cadiz harbour—thrown everything back for a year. Thirty-seven ships and quantities of stores were destroyed, and Drake, after threatening Lisbon, hovered off Cape St. Vincent for six weeks, snapping up Spanish coasters and preventing any movement of ships from the Mediterranean ports. This daring exploit increased the Spanish terror of the terrible "El Draque", but it also displays how excellent was his strategy. Two hundred years before Jervis and Nelson he grasped the value of a vigorous offensive, and the truth that the enemy's coast line should be our frontier in war. He petitioned to be allowed to repeat his attack in 1588, and had the queen consented, probably the Armada would never have sailed. But Elizabeth refused, fearing that the Spanish fleet might elude him and find the Channel bare.

So the Armada, the great emprise against the heretic, officially

<sup>1</sup> Some £50,000.



blessed by Pope and clergy, with its motto from the Psalms,<sup>1</sup> sailed out of Lisbon on May 20, 1588: 130 ships, with 8000 seamen and 19,000 soldiers—a great fleet. It was to sail up Channel without seeking the English fleet, seize Margate, join Parma, who was to provide 30,000 picked Spanish troops from the Netherlands, and convey him over. The Armada made shocking weather to Corunna, taking nineteen days over it, and put in there to refit, stop leaks, and replace some of the rotting stores which the Spanish contractors had furnished. It did not leave Corunna till July 12, and now, more or less favoured by weather, appeared off the Lizard on July 19. The Channel fleet, under Lord Howard of Effingham, with Drake, Hawkins, Frobisher, Fenner, and Raymond, had just put back into Plymouth to get supplies, and was windbound there. The ships were warped out into the Sound and got to sea, but the Spanish fleet passed farther to the southward. Thus the Armada, in spite of all its tardiness, had got into the Channel, and the way was clear; there was no enemy in front except the tiny squadron under Seymour and Wynter, helping the Dutch to watch Parma in the narrow seas.

If the total of ships be counted, the English were more than the Spanish; but omitting the quite small craft that could take no real part, we may reckon that Howard had some seventy ships—many of these small also, and of little fighting value. Of the thirty queen's ships most were well armed and efficient; a dozen or more of the merchantmen could also play their part in a fight. They seemed, however, few and small compared with the size of the enemy. Yet it was not a fight which was to be settled by size or number. The Spaniards were overwhelming if they could bring their whole force to bear, but it remained to be decided whether they could do this.

The fact, realized now, but dimly seen then, is that the two "fleets" were radically different, the Spanish of the past, the English of the future. Fighting mainly in the smoother waters of the Mediterranean, the Spanish ship was a castle on the sea, directed by the sailors, or even at times rowed by galley slaves, but depending for fighting purposes on the fact that it carried a

<sup>1</sup> "Exsurge Deus et vindica causam tuam" (Ps. xxxv. 23).



mass of well-drilled soldiers. A Spanish ship carried few guns for its size, and little powder for them. Manceuvring, seamanship, gunnery, were all subordinate matters; the one object was to come at once to close quarters, to board and fight it out with steel and arquebus. So the Spaniards had beaten the Turks in the great sea fight of Lepanto. A Spanish fleet was, briefly, an army at sea.<sup>1</sup> But the English seaman, bred in rougher weather, had developed a more seaworthy type of ship, lower, smaller, stiffer, and faster, offering a smaller target, carrying relatively far more guns, and trusting to do its execution at a distance. In the sixteenth century, guns could not be elevated nor depressed, and good shooting therefore depended on steering, and sailing qualities. Thus in a breeze the Spanish ships, badly steered and handled, heeling over before the wind, sent their weather broadsides flying skywards, while their lee guns fired into the sea. The English ships, however, on a more even keel, made sure work, often hulling the Spaniards' exposed sides below the water-line. Even the Spanish size and numbers were less formidable than they appeared. Out of their 130 only fifty were efficient men-of-war; the rest, store-ships and transports that could not fight, unless by boarding. The total Spanish broadside was in weight only about two-thirds of the English. Their commander, Medina Sidonia, was a landsman who had offered Philip a number of excellent reasons why he should not be put in command,<sup>2</sup> and was certainly incapable of handling a fleet. Finally, now that the English had got the weather-gage, and could follow the Armada up Channel, making a running fight of it, they could close or not as they wished; and every Spanish ship that was crippled was bound to lag behind and be taken.

These things, however, were to be made clear on the way up Channel; they were not yet seen. All that was known was that the Armada was in the Channel: beacon fires blazed; the militia was called out; 70,000 men gathered in London, and Elizabeth reviewed her men at Tilbury.

<sup>1</sup>The Duke of Medina Sidonia was to hand over the conduct of the enterprise to the Duke of Parma (the general) as soon as he met him at Dunkirk.

<sup>2</sup>His last and least valid argument was that he was sick when he went to sea. But so was Nelson.



Meanwhile, for a breathless week, England waited, and the Armada lumbered on its way up Channel, fighting on the 21st, on the 23rd off St. Alban's Head, and on the 25th off St. Catherine's, losing some ships, yet by no means crippled. It anchored at Calais on the 27th, ready to embark Parma's men.

Here came the first great blow. Parma was not ready; the Dutch held him blockaded. He wrote to Medina Sidonia bidding him clear the sea of the English and Dutch; that done, all would be well.

While Medina Sidonia and his captains were digesting this unsatisfactory reply, eight fire ships were sent drifting with the tide into Calais Roads. Panic seized the Spaniards, who cut their cables and sailed eastwards, scattering as they went. The next day (July 29), of the whole Spanish fleet which was nominally engaged, only fifteen, those round Medina Sidonia, managed to come to close quarters; but they were shorter of powder even than the English: in the words of a Spaniard who took part in the battle, "they fighting with their great ordnance, and our men defending themselves with harquebuss fire and musketry". Some were taken, some sunk, and some ran aground, a fate that would have befallen them all had the wind not shifted more to the southward. But by the evening the Armada—still to Drake's mind "wonderful and strong, yet we pluck their feathers little by little"—in reality a beaten fleet, was flying northward. Storms, the rocks of Scotland and Ireland, did the rest. Far out into the Atlantic<sup>1</sup> as the ships beat their way, yet their leeway brought them in again, and Mull, the Giant's Causeway, Donegal, and Achill all took toll of them. Twelve were embayed in Sligo Bay, and to those who got ashore the wild Irish of the west were as merciless as the sea. Fifty-three only got back to Spain. Philip gave the weather-worn survivors magnanimous consolation: "I sent you forth to fight with men, and not with the elements". Elizabeth, piously, was of the same mind, inscribing on her Armada medal, *Afflavit Deus*, "God blew with His wind, and they were scattered". Yet the fact is not so; the Armada had all in its favour till the panic at Calais; till, in short, it had failed. And how complete the failure was, is revealed by a few

<sup>1</sup>400 miles westward from the north of Scotland.



figures. In the first day's battle only two Englishmen were killed, and only sixty in the whole fighting. The Spaniards *lost more ships than we did men*. The Spanish fleet was hopelessly overmatched in the kind of warfare it encountered. It could never have beat its way down Channel against the English fleet; thus there only remained the way round by the north, and that was certain destruction.

So the great thundercloud that had gathered against England for close on forty years hung imminent for a week, broke, and passed away.

## 8. The Last Days of Elizabeth

Nearly fifteen more years remained to the great queen after the Armada was beaten, and they were fifteen years of glory. Yet in a sense the reign ends in 1588. The climax was reached, the day won, the policy of the queen and her ministers triumphant. What follows may be grouped under two heads: it was either the natural gathering in of what had been already won, or it was the low beginnings of what was to be important hereafter; it was either gleaning or sowing. Thus in the gleaning came the remains of the war with Spain, now at the mercy of English sea captains. In 1589 Drake led an expedition to Portugal, and in 1590 Sir Richard Grenville fought the amazing fight of "the one and the fifty-three", where, though the—

"Little *Revenge* herself went down by the island crags,  
To be lost evermore in the main",

the memory of her and her commander will abide so long as the Jack flies in the wind. Drake, and Hawkins with him, tried a last cruise to the West Indies in 1594, which failed, both commanders dying at sea.<sup>1</sup> Two years later Howard, Raleigh, and Essex sacked Cadiz again, destroying the Spanish ships at their moorings. These were the great things; more fatal to Spain was

<sup>1</sup>"Drake he's in his hammock an' a thousand mile away  
(Capten, art tha sleepin' there below?),  
Slung atween the round shot in Nombre Dios bay,  
An' dreamin' ari the time o' Plymouth Hoe."



the fact that every cargo from the Indies, every ship crossing the Atlantic, every reinforcement going to the Low Countries, had to run the gauntlet of English buccaneers; and little escaped them. So the wealth and power of Spain was drained away. Her silver from the New World robbed, her rich possessions in the Netherlands lost to her, her decline began, and became more and more marked. In France, too, Spanish policy failed; the Huguenot Henry of Navarre established himself on the throne with Elizabeth's aid, in defiance of the Guises and the Spanish party; and, once there, began the building up of that great French ascendancy which was to replace the Hapsburg power that had domineered over Europe so long.

Shortly after the Armada many of Elizabeth's older ministers—those servants who had served her so well in her critical years—died: Leicester, Walsingham, Hatton, were all dead by 1591. Burleigh survived till 1598. Of the younger men, Robert Cecil inherited his father, Burleigh's, caution; but Sir Walter Raleigh and Essex were of a wilder school. <sup>The new school.</sup> With all his romantic qualities, the polish that won him the queen's favour, the adventurous spirit which drove him to found his colony in Virginia, and explore Guiana and the Orinoco, Raleigh never had the gift to win men to follow him, as Drake had. Essex was still less governable than Raleigh. Sent out to the prodigiously difficult task of reducing Ireland to order, he made a feeble treaty with Tyrone, the chief Irish leader, instead of fighting him; and then, knowing that the queen would never ratify it, returned headlong from Ireland without leave, and intruded muddy and travel-worn on the queen's presence. She, much affronted at his whole conduct, banished him from Court. Furious at this, Essex fell into treason, tampered with the Scots and some Catholic lords, and eventually tried to raise a rebellion in London. He was taken prisoner and beheaded in 1601.

The names of Essex and Raleigh thus raise to our minds two important issues in history, the matter of Ireland and the beginnings of our colonial empire; but they will come up for treatment later. Elizabeth's policy in Ireland settled nothing; it only led up to all the disastrous events in the seventeenth century—the Rebellion, Cromwell's conquest, and the bitter struggle in William's



reign. In spite of Gilbert and Raleigh, no Elizabethan colony was successful. All failed; at the end of the reign England had not yet fixed her grip on one bit of land oversea. Thus the story of our colonial empire really belongs to a later time. Again we postpone to the seventeenth century the story of the rise of the Puritan party and the new spirit which animated Parliament. These are two new factors of paramount importance, but their day was not yet. It is true that signs of each appear in Elizabeth's reign; there were many men who thought that Elizabeth's settlement of the Church did not go far enough, stubborn men who were hostile to any Established Church, men who desired complete liberty to preach what seemed good to them, and were angry when they were forbidden to do so. Such were the Brownists, the Baptists, and the followers of Thomas Cartwright, who wrote libellously against the bishops in the *Mar-Prelate Tracts*. But all this really belongs to the epoch of the Stuarts and not to the Tudors. So, too, with Parliament, where now and again rash members ventured to offer unpalatable advice to the queen, generally on the subject of her marriage—advice which she contemptuously refused, sometimes despotically rewarding the adviser with imprisonment. It is true that at the end of her reign Parliament appeared to win a victory when the queen promised to grant no more Monopolies—a word which seems to bear a foretaste of the Constitutional struggle about it. But in reality throughout the reign queen and Parliament were on excellent terms; she steered the ship, and they looked on, only daring to speak to the woman at the wheel when they thought that she was blundering—and, of course, they were sure she was blundering when she refused to marry and provide an heir to the throne. As a rule, however, the history of Parliament is described in the Speaker's words to his queen when she demanded of him what had passed in the session. "May it please your majesty, seven weeks have passed." It was a Parliamentary millennium.

It is, of course, characteristic of the great reign that it produced what is called the "Elizabethan school" of letters. Apart from Shakespeare, who stands unrivalled in all time, there was Spenser, whose *Faery Queene* is

The Elizabethan  
men of letters.



the most poetic of romances in the old-world style, and Francis Bacon, whose *Essays* still surpass, in their profundity of thought and terse vigour of expression, anything that modern essay-writing can reach; Hooker's *Ecclesiastical polity* remains a model of judgment and moderation in theological controversy; Christopher Marlowe, as a playwright, was, in gorgeousness of imagination, hardly inferior to Shakespeare; while the writers of lyric verse, of whom Sir Philip Sidney was the most distinguished, gave England a new form of literary expression, graceful, polished, and true. All these men's work is characteristically English. They borrowed old stories—Shakespeare most of all—and they sometimes seem to imitate old models. But what appear at first sight borrowings and imitations are in all cases so seized upon and mastered that they become original. The spirit is breathed upon the dry bones so that they become flesh and blood again. This intense vitality of the Elizabethan school, the alertness of mind, the joyful outlook, the breaking and casting away of old fetters and the adventuring out into new worlds of thought, the vigorous patriotism and Englishness of them, is after all only the expression in the finest minds of what every Englishman of Elizabeth's time felt. For him the fetters of the old learning were broken, the years of dread were over, the enemy humbled, the new world open, and his land, his England, safe at last.

✓ So the great queen died—a true Tudor, in that she understood her people, even better than her ministers did; singularly unscrupulous, yet magnificently successful; unlovable in character, yet romantically beloved; served throughout her reign with wonderful loyalty, yet as parsimonious in her reward of it as she was with her money; vain, untruthful, capricious, and sometimes mean; yet, with all her defects, indubitably great. Her policy, so hesitating in appearance, was in its very uncertainty profoundly wise. Fools, in difficulties, rush into hasty decisions. What England wanted was time. Time for the Established Church to grow firmer, time for the new alliance with Scotland to settle, time to breed the race of seamen who beat off the Armada; and that Elizabeth gave England. At the end came concord at home, a high reputation abroad, and—Elizabeth's greatest gift—



12/2/25  
a succession to the throne that would afford no chance of baronial quarrelling, would open no door to aggression from Rome and the Catholics, would involve England in no dangerous entanglement with either France or Spain, but would bring about that inestimable boon, the union of England and Scotland under one king. So the forty-five momentous years passed to a serene conclusion:

“Time and the hour runs through the roughest day.”



Part II  
FROM THE UNION OF THE CROWNS  
TO THE PRESENT DAY

BY  
C. H. K. MARTEN, M.A.







## Summary of History by Reigns (1603-89)

During the reign of *James I* (1603-25) the main interest in Foreign affairs lay in the king's policy with regard to the opening stages of the terrible Thirty Years War in Germany, a war which broke out in 1618 (pp. 331-6). In Home affairs came the beginning of the rift between King and Parliament, and the revival by the latter of the formidable weapon of impeachment (1621). The king's chief adviser in the early years of his reign was the wise Earl of Salisbury (d. 1612), and at the end of his life the volatile Duke of Buckingham (Ch. XXVI). In Irish affairs the reign was important because of the Plantation of Ulster (p. 426), and in Imperial History for the first successful settlement on the coast of North America, and the first "factory" in India (pp. 404-5). Among other points of interest in the reign may be mentioned the Authorized Version of the Bible, published in 1611, and the death of Shakespeare in 1616.

In the reign of *Charles I* (1625-49), the king's first adviser was Buckingham (d. 1628). At first, in Foreign affairs some activity was shown, but in the later stages of the Thirty Years War England played no part (pp. 336-9). It is, however, in the struggle with Parliament that the main importance of the reign lies. In the first three years of the reign came three Parliaments, in the third of which the famous Petition of Right was drawn up (pp. 355-60). Then followed eleven years without a Parliament (1629-40), a period during which the influence of Laud and Strafford was conspicuous, the latter being the efficient if somewhat harsh ruler of Ireland (pp. 360-3 and 426-8). Meanwhile in Scotland dissatisfaction with the religious policy of the Stuarts finally came to a head with the signing of the National Covenant in 1638, and the two Bishops' Wars followed in 1639 and 1640 (pp. 364-7). To meet the financial burdens the Long Parliament was called in 1640; it secured the execution of Strafford and abolished the arbitrary powers of the king, but friction between the majority in Parliament and the king increased, and finally led to war (pp. 367-72). In the Civil War (1642-5), the Parliamentary forces, joined by those of the Scots, finally triumphed; and then follow the series of confused events which led to the execution of the king in the beginning of 1649 (Ch. XXVIII and XXIX, Sec. 1). Meanwhile in Ireland, before the Civil War broke out in England, a rebellion had occurred in 1641, which led to a prolonged period of bloodshed (pp. 426-9).

The *Commonwealth* (1649-60) was a period of continuous and successful warfare, first of all in Ireland, then in Scotland and in England. There followed war in Europe, first with England's new colonial and commercial rival, Holland (1652), and then with her old



foe, Spain (1656), a war which led to the conquest of Jamaica and Dunkirk. The Government for the first four years was in the control of the "Rump"—a small remnant of members of the Long Parliament. Subsequently Cromwell was the real ruler, and in 1654 became Protector; but he never succeeded, despite various experiments, in organizing a Government based on popular support, and, on his death in 1658, a period of confusion followed which resulted in the restoration of Charles II (Ch. XXIX and XXX).

The reign of *Charles II* (1660-85) was, so far as Foreign policy is concerned, somewhat involved; our hostility to Holland continued, leading to two wars in 1665 and 1672, but between these wars England was for a short time in alliance with her; in the later part of the reign the great French king, Louis XIV, who reigned from 1643 to 1715, paid Charles II large sums of money, and made the policy of England subservient to that of France (pp. 400-3). For the first seven years of the reign Clarendon was the king's chief adviser; and during his ministry came the settlement of the kingdom after the Commonwealth, the first of the two Dutch wars, the Great Plague and the Fire of London. After Clarendon's fall came the ministry known as the "Cabal" (1667-73), and then that of Danby (1673-8). The years from 1678-81 were years of crisis, during which occurred the attempt to exclude the Duke of York, the king's brother, from coming to the throne; but the king triumphed, and during the last years of his life (1681-5) did much as he liked (Ch. XXXI). Despite Charles's supremacy at the close of his life, the reign was important in our Constitutional History, especially for the further control of Parliament in finance (p. 411) and the development of individual liberty by the Habeas Corpus Act (p. 414). The reign of Charles II is important in our Religious History for the separation between the Nonconformists and the Anglican Church in England (p. 409) and the persecution of the Presbyterians in Scotland (p. 419); in our Imperial History for the acquisition of Bombay and (for a time) of Tangier, and of the middle colonies in North America (pp. 404-5); and in our Military History for the organization of a Standing Army (p. 410). In Science the reign saw the foundation of the Royal Society, in Art the buildings of Sir Christopher Wren, and in Literature the greatest poems of John Milton.

The reign of *James II* (1685-8) is very short. In three years his attempt to impose Roman Catholicism on England had alienated the great majority of Englishmen, and the Revolution of 1688 led to his flight to France (pp. 407-8 and 416-18).

*N.B.*—In arrangement, Ch. XXV deals with the characters of James I and Charles I and their Foreign policy, and Chs. XXVI to XXIX with Domestic History (1603-60). Ch. XXX reviews the Foreign policy of the Commonwealth and of Charles II and James II, and the beginnings of our Empire; and Ch. XXXI outlines the Domestic History of England from the accession of Charles II, and of Scotland from the period of the Commonwealth. Ch. XXXII contains a brief sketch of Irish History under the Tudors and Stuarts.

For list of chief dates of period see end of volume.



## PART II

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### XXV. The First Two Stuarts and their Foreign Policy

The development of England at every stage has been largely influenced by the character of its monarchs. But it may be doubted whether at any other period more depended upon the character of the sovereign than during the first half of the Seventeenth Century, when, as we shall see, most difficult questions arose both at home and abroad. It will be as well, therefore, to say something at once about the first two kings of the house of Stuart who sat upon the English throne—about James I, who succeeded Queen Elizabeth in 1603, and reigned till 1625, and his son, Charles I, who reigned from 1625 till 1649.

James I has been described as the most learned man who ever occupied a British throne. He was highly educated. In his youth he was something of a prodigy,<sup>1</sup> and in later life he wrote tolerable verses, whilst his speeches and <sup>Character of James I.</sup> prose writings were vigorous and clever.<sup>2</sup> He was exceptionally well informed, especially in theology, and well versed in foreign politics. Moreover, not only was he a great reader, but a great rider as well; he was fond of all forms of exercise, and was a mighty hunter. He was humorous, and not without shrewdness. "Bring stools for the ambassadors," was his remark when a deputation came from the House of Commons in 1621, James

<sup>1</sup> At the age of ten "he was able, *extempore*," wrote a contemporary, "to read a chapter out of the Bible out of Latin into French, and out of French after into English".

<sup>2</sup> His writings include *A Counterblast to Tobacco*, a violent attack upon the practice of smoking



# British Rulers after 1603

James I of England, VI of Scotland, died 1625. = Anne of Denmark, died 1619.

Henry, died 1612.

Charles I, = Henrietta Maria, died 1669.

Elizabeth, = Frederick, Elector Palatine, died 1662.

Charles II, = Catharine of Braganza, died 1705.

Anne = James II, expelled 1688, died 1701.

Mary = William of Orange, died 1718.

Henrietta, = Duke of Orleans, died 1690.

Sophia, = Elector of Hanover, died 1714.

Prince Rupert, died 1682.

Mary, = William III, died 1702.

Anne, = George of Denmark, died 1708.

William III, = MARY, died 1702.

Anne = Victor of Savoy, died 1694.

George I, = Sophia Dorothea of Zell, died 1727.

Duke of Gloucester, died 1701.

James Francis, died 1766.

Charles Edward, died 1788.

Henry Benedict, Cardinal of York, died 1807.

George II, = Caroline of Anspach, died 1760.

Sophia = Frederick William I, died 1740.

Frederick the Great, died 1786.

Frederick, Prince of Wales, = Augusta of Saxe-Coburg, died 1751.

Duke of Cumberland, died 1765.

George III, = Charlotte of Mecklenburg, died 1820.

Duke of York, died 1767.

Duke of Gloucester, died 1805.

Prince of Wales, afterwards George IV, died 1830.

Duke of Clarence, afterwards William IV, died 1837.

Edward, Duke of Kent, = Victoria of Saxe-Coburg, died 1820.

Duke of Cumberland, King of Hanover, 1837-51.

Duke of Sussex, died 1843.

Duke of Cambridge, died 1850.

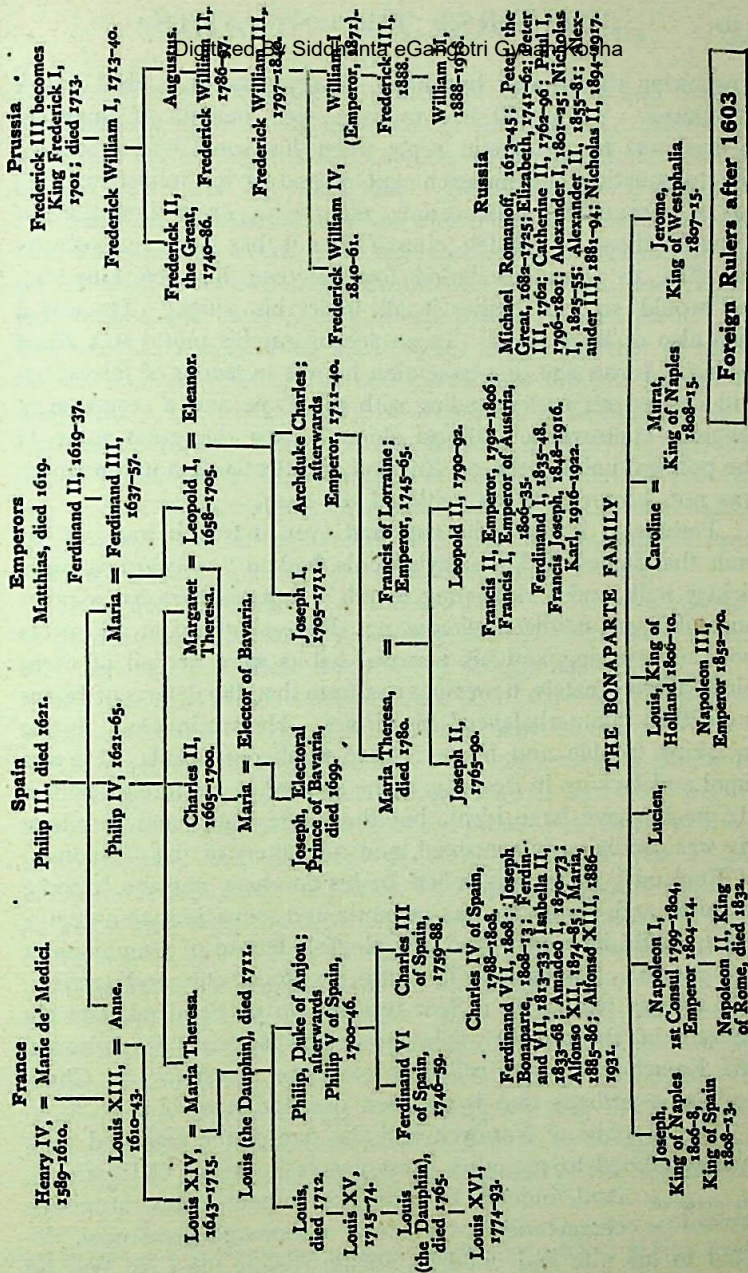
Victoria, died 1901.

George, King of Hanover, 1837-66.

Edward VII, died 1910.

George V.







recognizing that it was becoming, in some sense, a rival power to himself. "You will live to have your bellyful of impeachments," was his prophetic reply when his son Charles pressed him to sanction the impeachment of one of his ministers. He was a thoroughly well-meaning man, with every intention of doing his duty. "He felt himself", as it has been humorously put, "as an enormous brood fowl set over his new kingdom, and would so fain gather it all under his wings." He was a man also of large ideas. In an age of war his motto was *Beati pacifici*. In an age of persecution he was in favour of toleration, and desired an understanding with the Pope and a cessation of religious controversy. Almost alone he saw the great value of the political union between England and Scotland, a union which was not, however, to be achieved till 1707.

Perhaps it is not quite true and even if true it was not his fault that James, in Macaulay's words, had an "awkward figure, a rickety walk, and a slobbering mouth"; but his personal appearance, if it was neither ludicrous nor displeasing, was at all events not prepossessing, and his personal habits were not all of them nice. Unfortunately, however, apart from that, the defects of James more than counterbalanced his virtues. He was indolent, averse to taking trouble, and he refused to think out details. He was timid and lacking in decision, as he showed in his foreign policy. He might have large ideas, but they were vague and formless. He was prodigiously conceited, and no flattery of this "Solomon of England", as he was called by his courtiers, was too fulsome for him; and, finally, he was pedantic and loquacious to a degree which would have provoked any English House of Commons at any period. James was, in truth, unsympathetic and tactless, and, as was natural in a Scot brought up in Scotland, entirely ignorant of the ordinary opinions of the ordinary Englishman. The French king once called James "the wisest fool in Christendom"—perhaps that is the best description of him.

The portraits of Vandyck and the fate of the martyred king have combined to prejudice most people in favour of Charles I.

Character of Charles I. And, indeed, he was not without many attractive characteristics. He was a thorough gentleman, devoted to his wife and children, artistic (before the Civil War he



had acquired the best picture gallery in Europe<sup>1</sup>), and fond of good literature, and more especially of Shakespeare. Moreover, he was a hard worker at the business of his kingdom. But as a ruler he showed his worst side. He was a silent, obstinate, self-absorbed, unimaginative man, who never knew what anyone else was thinking about. He was absolutely untrustworthy; he would make promises, but with all sorts of mental and private reservations, and consequently he often failed to keep them. No one who has not followed his intrigues in detail, either at home or with foreign powers, can understand how difficult he was to deal with. He would pursue at the same time three or four contradictory plans, and it is not surprising, therefore, that his policy should have been futile. It might be said of him, as was said of another ruler, "that his head was as full of schemes as a warren was full of rabbits, and, like rabbits, his schemes went to ground to avoid notice or antagonism".

Such was the character of the two kings. We must now see in what manner they dealt with the problems which faced them. We may take, first, those that arose in foreign affairs, since the desire to get money to take part in foreign politics profoundly affected the relations between the Stuart kings and their parliaments. In some respects England's position in 1603 was far more secure than it had been before. When James VI of Scotland became James I of England these two countries, after hundreds of years of rivalry, were at last united under one king. Hitherto, for England's Continental foes, Scotland had been the most convenient of allies; when English energies were absorbed in foreign wars Scotland always had the opportunity of making an invasion, an opportunity of which she not infrequently took advantage. But henceforth, Scotland is, generally speaking, the ally and not the foe of England in her foreign undertakings. Moreover, there were no rivals to the throne whom foreign powers could support, and the succession seemed secure. Again, there was no danger to be apprehended from Spain. Englishmen during the first half of the seventeenth

Position  
of England  
in 1603.

<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately the Commonwealth sold most of the pictures after the king's execution; and they are now to be found in various foreign collections, and especially in Paris, Madrid, and Leningrad.



century, and even later, continued to hate the Spaniards, but they no longer had reason to fear them. Consequently England was not vitally concerned in affairs on the Continent, as she had been under Elizabeth through fear of Spain's ambitions, and as she was to be later, owing to the ambitions of France.

We need not concern ourselves with James I's policy in the years previous to 1618. Until his death, in 1612, *Lord Salisbury*,

Foreign policy  
before 1618.

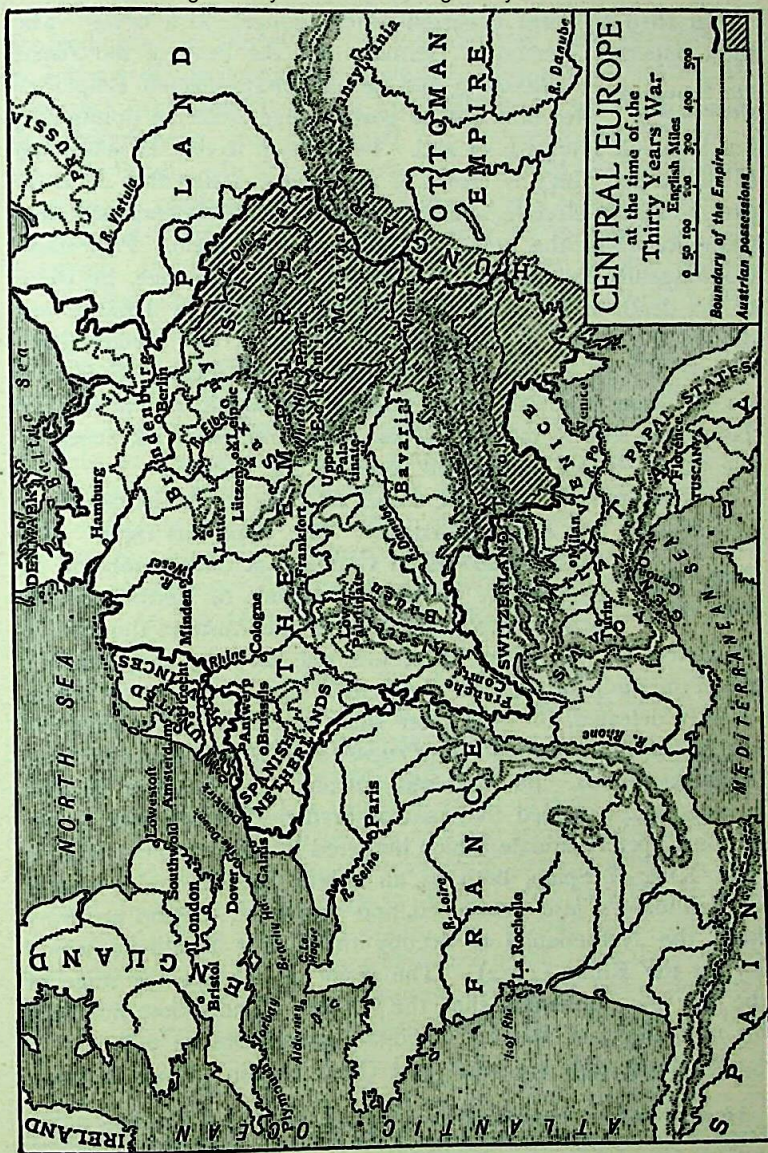
James I's minister, had the controlling influence, and a cautious policy of peace was pursued. After Lord Salisbury's death, James designed marriages for two of his children. One, *Elizabeth*, later known from her great beauty as the "Queen of Hearts", married, in 1613, the Elector Palatine of the Rhine, the grandson of William of Orange and the leader of the Calvinistic party in Germany. On the other hand, for his son *Charles*, James designed a marriage with the daughter of the King of Spain, the great champion of the Papacy. With this object he opened negotiations in 1617, negotiations which, though they ended in failure, were regarded with great suspicion and disfavour by James's subjects.

In 1618 there broke out in Germany the war known as "*the Thirty Years War*". The war developed into a gigantic Euro-

Condition of  
Germany  
in 1618.

pean struggle, which gradually drew in all the chief states in Europe, and it was destined to have vast consequences. To understand the war, and the part Great Britain played in it, something must first be said as to the condition of Germany at this period. Germany, in the seventeenth century, consisted of some three hundred states bound together in a confederation called the Holy Roman Empire, at its head being an Elected Emperor who held office for life. There was a good deal of friction between the rulers of the various states as to the constitution of Germany, some wanting to tighten the bonds of the Confederation and to exalt the powers of the emperor, and others holding contrary opinions. But, of course, the great line of division in Germany at that time was between the Protestants and Roman Catholics, the former being on the whole predominant in the north and the latter in the south of Germany.







In 1619 an event occurred which brought on a crisis. The most important person in Germany was the head of the *House of Habsburg*, and he was always elected Emperor.<sup>1</sup> *The Bohemian election, 1619.* Not only did he govern large Austrian dominions, but he ruled Hungary as well. In addition to this, he was King of Bohemia. But the crown of *Bohemia* was, like that of Hungary, in theory elective, and the House of Habsburg was staunchly Catholic, whilst the nobles in Bohemia were mainly Protestant. Consequently the nobles of Bohemia took advantage, in 1619, of the death of the Emperor to make a change of dynasty, and offered the crown to a Protestant, Frederick, the Elector Palatine, who was, as stated above, James's son-in-law. Frederick asked James's advice as to whether he should accept it, but James was slow in making up his mind,<sup>2</sup> and Frederick accepted the throne before James had come to any decision.

"That prince," said the Pope, referring to Frederick, "has cast himself into a fine labyrinth." The Pope was right. The

*Beginning of  
Thirty Years  
War, 1619-22.*

Catholic powers in Germany at once combined to support the claims to Bohemia of Ferdinand, the new Emperor and head of the Austrian dominions. Frederick, on the other hand, was not cordially supported by the Protestant princes in Germany. His forces were consequently defeated, in little more than an hour, at the battle of the *White Hill*, just outside *Prague*; and he was expelled from Bohemia (1620). But that was not all. The Duke of Bavaria invaded and occupied that part of Frederick's dominions known as the Upper Palatinate, which bordered his own territory (1621). The King of Spain, both as an ardent Catholic and a cousin of Ferdinand's, also intervened, and proceeded to send an army from the Netherlands to occupy the Lower Palatinate, which lay on the Rhine (1622). The result of the opening stage of the war was, therefore, that the Elector Palatine lost not only his new kingdom, but his hereditary possessions as well.

We must now see what part Great Britain played in these

<sup>1</sup> A Habsburg was always elected emperor from 1438 until the close of the Holy Roman Empire in 1806, except for a brief period in the eighteenth century, when the Austrian dominions were ruled by a woman.

<sup>2</sup> The matter, of course, was urgent, but all the answer Frederick's agent could extract from James was, "I will consider of it."



proceedings. Public opinion in England had been enthusiastic in support of Frederick, the Protestant husband of an English princess.<sup>1</sup> It wanted to force a Protestant policy upon the Government, and clamoured for an immediate war with Spain. In this public opinion was right. The Spanish king would probably not have occupied the Palatinate at all if he had felt convinced that it would have led to hostilities with England. But he was well served by Gondomar, his ambassador in London, who was much more aware of James's timidity and indecision than James was himself, and knew exactly how, by a mixture of firmness and flattery, to manage him. And therefore, though English volunteers went out to fight on the Continent, and the House of Commons enthusiastically passed motions in Frederick's favour,<sup>2</sup> nothing else happened. James, indeed, wished to be the peacemaker of Europe, and sent numberless embassies to the Continent; but he never realized that diplomacy, unbacked by armed force, was useless, and that the differences between Protestants and Catholics in Germany were, at that time, too deep to be settled merely by a little judicious management.

Having failed to prevent the Spanish occupation of the Palatinate, James thought he could get the Spaniards to surrender it if he arranged a marriage between Charles and the Spanish Infanta, and he accordingly reopened the negotiations which he had begun in 1617. Finally Charles—fancying himself in love with the Infanta, whom, by the way, he had never seen—and Buckingham, James's favourite, persuaded James to let them go to Madrid and woo the Infanta (1623). As Tom and John Smith, they crossed the Continent, and arrived at Madrid at eight o'clock one night. But the Spanish statesmen in return for the marriage, instead of being prepared to give up the Palatinate, tried to extract from Charles conces-

The Spanish marriage and the journey to Madrid, 1623.

<sup>1</sup> The enthusiasm even extended to the lawyers, and thirty gentlemen of the Middle Temple swore on their drawn swords, after the fatal battle outside Prague, to live or die in the service of Queen Elizabeth; and Charles, who was devoted to his sister, was so much upset by the news of this battle, that for two days he shut himself up in his room and would speak to no one.

<sup>2</sup> The members waved their hats "as high as they could hold them" when one motion was put to the vote.



sions for the Roman Catholics in England.<sup>1</sup> Charles made all sorts of promises—which no one knew better than himself that he could not have kept; and finally came back in disgust, to be received with acclamations and bonfires,<sup>2</sup> not so much because he had returned as because he had returned without the Infanta.

The expedition  
to the Pala-  
tinate, 1624.

Buckingham and Charles were now all for war to recover the Palatinate. James yielded and Parliament voted the money, and an army was collected (1624). But the army was, to quote a contemporary, "a rabble of raw and poor rascals", and never reached its destination, being diverted to another siege in 1625. In the same year James died, with the Palatinate still unrecovered.

When Charles came to the throne, the Protestants were fighting for their existence in Germany, but a new champion had arisen on behalf of the Protestant cause in the person of the *King of Denmark*. Charles agreed to pay him £360,000 a year for the conduct of a war in Germany. He paid one instalment of £46,000—and that was all. For one thing, Charles had obtained, largely through his own fault, insufficient supplies of money from Parliament. For another, soon after Charles made the engagement to the Danish king, he and Buckingham, who largely controlled the king's policy, came to the conclusion that the Protestantism of Germany might best be succoured and the Palatinate recovered by an attack upon the Spanish ports. It was, doubtless, a round-about plan to attack the King of Spain in order to put pressure on the Emperor to restore Frederick, but a naval war with Spain was sure to be popular, and it was easier than campaigning in Germany. Accordingly an expedition was organized to *Cadiz*, which was to repeat Drake's exploit, sack the town and capture the treasure fleet coming from America. But the expedition came to hopeless grief and took neither Cadiz nor the treasure fleet (1625).<sup>3</sup> The next year the King of Denmark, with soldiers

<sup>1</sup> Charles was only allowed one interview of a purely formal nature with the Infanta; he tried to effect another of a more informal character by leaping into a garden where she was walking, but the Infanta, who did not care for Charles, rushed away shrieking.

<sup>2</sup> There were a hundred and eight alone between St. Paul's and London Bridge.

<sup>3</sup> The expedition had started in the stormy month of October, with pressed crews and soldiers, with ships whose hulls were rotten and whose sails—at all events in the case of



clamouring for pay in consequence of the failure of the English subsidies, was obliged to take the offensive, was decisively defeated, and accordingly returned to his own country (1626). Charles's initial interference in the Thirty Years War had, therefore, been disastrous.

Meantime Charles had got into difficulties with France. At the end of his father's reign he was engaged to marry a French princess, *Henrietta Maria*, and on his accession he married her. By the terms of the marriage treaty concessions were promised to the Roman Catholics in England, and James also, just before his death, had undertaken to lend ships to the French king. The French king and his famous minister, Richelieu, wanted to use the ships to aid them in a war against the Protestants in France, the Huguenots as they are called. Charles, after futile endeavours and discreditable subterfuges to evade his father's promises,<sup>1</sup> was obliged to lend them—to the great wrath of his subjects in England.

Difficulties  
with France,  
1625-6.

Later on the King of France demanded that the promised concessions to the Catholics in England should be granted, and in 1627 the two countries gradually drifted into war. Buckingham was himself sent with an expedition to capture a fort in the *Isle of Rhé*, in order to assist *La Rochelle*, the Huguenot stronghold on the west coast of France which the French king was still besieging. At that time there was no standing army, and a force largely composed of the riffraff of the country was not likely to be successful.<sup>2</sup> Buckingham, however, did well, and inspired his men with courage, if not with enthusiasm; and, but for the fact that, through no fault of his own, the French managed to revictual the fort, and that, through contrary winds, reinforcements failed to leave England, he might have succeeded. As it was, Buckingham

The Rhé expedition, 1627, and Buckingham's assassination, 1628.

one ship—dated from the Armada; and the food was exceedingly bad, "such as no dog in Paris garden would eat", said a contemporary. On reaching Cadiz, the men got drunk, and the ships finally returned home with scarcely enough men to work them.

<sup>1</sup> Amongst other things, a mutiny was arranged so that the ships might not be given up.

<sup>2</sup> When an army had to be raised, each county had to contribute a certain number of men. The lord-lieutenant, as in this case, took advantage of the occasion to get rid of those who, it was desirable, "should leave their county for their county's good". Buckingham's troops were ignorant alike of marksmanship and discipline, and after being drilled for a fortnight at the seaside, were dispatched on the expedition.



came back discredited in the eyes of the country. Before he could fit out another expedition, the tenpenny knife of a disappointed officer called Felton, who thought, as many others thought, that the assassination of Buckingham was a meritorious act, closed his career (1628).

With Buckingham's death, "there was an abrupt transition", it has been said, "from a policy of adventurous activity to one of utter inaction". Charles would make proposals, Charles's in-action, 1629-49. at one and the same time, to France for an alliance against Spain, and to Spain for an alliance against France. He would offer to help *Gustavus Adolphus*, the King of Sweden, the new champion of Protestantism in Germany, and not the King of Denmark, and then to help the King of Denmark and not *Gustavus*. One ambassador said to Charles, "The truth is you pull down with one hand as fast as you build up with the other": and the criticism was a just one. Moreover, circumstances were against the prosecution of an active policy. At first, Charles had no money to back his schemes; and later he had his hands full with his quarrel with his own subjects. As a result, the influence of Great Britain in foreign affairs became a negligible quantity for the remainder of Charles's reign.

The Thirty Years War, therefore, ceased to be influenced by or to influence Great Britain; and we can only briefly allude to its later developments. *Gustavus Adolphus* had a brief spell of brilliant success and was then killed at the famous battle of *Lützen*<sup>1</sup> (1632). The Protestant cause appeared hopeless. But Richelieu, though he suppressed Protestants in France, was willing to support them in Germany by force of arms so as to weaken the house of Hapsburg. During the later stages of the war, the French armies exerted a decisive influence and were brilliantly successful. The war came finally to an end in 1648, France and Sweden acquiring large parts of what had been German territory whilst the German states were left more disunited and independent than before the war broke out. Upon Germany and the German nation the effects of the war, material and moral, were appalling—indeed, in

<sup>1</sup> At the crisis of the battle, a thick November mist obscured the sun, and *Gustavus*, losing his way, was killed by the enemy.



the opinion of Bismarck, the great Prussian statesman, Germany was still suffering from these effects in 1880.

It must be confessed that England's foreign policy during the first half of the seventeenth century was both inglorious and ineffective. Many explanations may be offered. There was no standing army, and consequently no force behind English diplomacy; and if England went to war, her hastily trained levies had little chance against more experienced soldiers. Parliament again, though keen for war, did not, as a matter of fact, provide either James or Charles with sufficient money to wage it effectively—though in the case of Charles it was, as we shall see, largely his own fault for not explaining what he intended to do. Moreover, ill fortune attended the English efforts. But the chief cause of the futility of English policy lay in the characters of James and Charles; the indecisive and timid policy of the one and the tortuous and contradictory policy of the other could only result in failure. Nor must we forget that England's failure enabled France, by becoming the ally of the German Protestants, to establish a predominance which was before the end of the century to threaten the independence of nearly every other country in Europe.

Failure of English policy—its causes.

## XXVI. King James I and Domestic Affairs

### 1. Plots against the King

We must turn now to the internal history of England under the first two Stuarts. Despite the fact that before Elizabeth's death there were other possible successors, James was fortunate in that his accession to the throne met with almost universal approval. There were, however, three unsuccessful plots against him. The first was rather an absurd plot, known as the *Bye Plot*, the object of which was to kidnap the king at Greenwich and to capture the Tower of London; it was designed by one Roman Catholic and

James I; the Bye and Main Plots, 1603.



betrayed to the Government by another. The evidence given by one of the conspirators led the Government to suspect the existence of the second plot, known as the *Main Plot*, the alleged object of which was to put, with Spanish aid, the Lady Arabella Stuart on the throne.<sup>1</sup> The details, are, however, obscure and uncertain, and it is very doubtful whether there was ever such a plot at all (1603).

The chief interest of the Main Plot lies in the fact that *Sir Walter Raleigh*,<sup>2</sup> the soldier and seaman, the prose writer and poet, the explorer and courtier of Elizabeth's day, was accused of being implicated in it. Raleigh, after a most unfair trial, was condemned to death for treason. But he was reprieved, and imprisoned in the Tower. He employed his time in writing a *History of the World* and in making chemical experiments.<sup>3</sup> Thirteen years later, in 1616, he obtained his freedom in order to find a gold mine on the Orinoco River, of which he had heard on one of his journeys. But his expedition was disastrous. He had a bad crew, he lost his best officers by disease, and he was unable, owing to sickness, to go up the river himself. Worst luck of all, since his last journey a Spanish town on the river had been moved from a position above the mine to one below it. Consequently Raleigh's men had to pass the town on their way to the mine. The Spaniards attacked them, or they attacked the Spaniards—one or other was inevitable—and Spanish blood was shed. On Raleigh's return the Spanish ambassador clamoured for his punishment. James I was at that time engaged in the marriage negotiations of Charles and the Infanta. He yielded, therefore, and executed Raleigh on the old charge of treason, and in so doing was guilty of an act for which posterity has never forgiven him (1618).<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Lady Arabella was, like James, descended from Margaret, the elder daughter of Henry VII; but, unlike James, she had been born in England, a fact which, in the eyes of some lawyers, gave her a better title to the throne.

<sup>2</sup> Raleigh's name has been spelt in seventy different ways. He himself signed his name variously in the course of his life, but he never signed it in the way it is often spelt now, i.e. Raleigh.

<sup>3</sup> Amongst other things he compounded drugs, and his "great cordial or elixir" had a wonderful reputation.

<sup>4</sup> Raleigh was warned, it is only fair to James to say, that any hostilities against the Spaniards would cost him his life; and in his over eagerness to get free from the Tower, Raleigh asserted that the mine was neither in nor near the King of Spain's territories, a statement which he must have known to be untrue.



The third plot was the famous *Gunpowder Plot*. The Roman Catholics had hoped much from a son of Mary Queen of Scots; and James, on his accession, was inclined to be tolerant, and excused the Roman Catholics

The Gunpowder Plot, 1605.

from the fines which they paid for not going to their parish churches.<sup>1</sup> The immediate result of this concession was an invasion of Roman Catholic priests from abroad—no less than a hundred and forty in six months—and such signs of activity that James felt obliged to reimpose the fines and to banish the priests. It was this which prompted the Gunpowder Plot (1605). Its leader, Robert Catesby, was something of a hero—of great strength fascinating manners, and a real leader of men, with magnetic influence over others—but very wrongheaded, driven to desperation, almost to madness, by the persecution which the Roman Catholics had endured. Amongst the other conspirators was Guy Fawkes, who came of an old Yorkshire family, and had seen much warfare in the Netherlands. The plan of the plot was to blow up the House of Lords when the king and the members of both Houses of Parliament were assembled in it at the opening of the session; to capture James's son, Charles, and proclaim him king; and then to inform other Roman Catholics of the success of the plot at a hunting match which was to be arranged in the Midlands, and with their aid to organize a Roman Catholic Government.

The plotters first tried to dig a mine from an adjacent house through the foundations of the House of Lords; then they hired a cellar, or rather a room on the ground floor, underneath the House of Lords, and put in it two tons of gunpowder in barrels. Finally, however, one of the conspirators, appalled at the enormity of the crime, sent a letter of warning to a cousin of his who was a member of the House of Lords, and who gave the letter to the Government. Consequently, the night before Parliament met, the barrels were discovered, and Guy Fawkes with them; and subsequently he and the other conspirators were either killed in fighting or executed. The result of the plot was that laws of extreme severity were passed against the Roman

<sup>1</sup> They were extremely heavy—£20 a month, or else the confiscation of two-thirds of their property.



Catholics—laws, for instance, which excluded them from all professions, which forbade them to appear at Court or within ten miles of London unless employed in business there, and which made the fines against them even more severe. Parliament was always clamouring for these laws to be put into execution, though James occasionally, and Charles very often, failed to enforce them.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. The King's Ministers

We must now say a word as to James's advisers during his reign. The king, on his accession, retained in office, as chief minister, Robert Cecil, the son of Elizabeth's great minister, Lord Burleigh, and created him *Earl of Salisbury*.<sup>2</sup> "He was fit to prevent things going worse, not fit to make them better", was the judgment upon him of Bacon, his cousin. The remark was uncousinly and somewhat unjust. A man of vast industry and sound sense, a capable financier, a clever manager of the king's business in Parliament, Salisbury, up till his death in 1612, did good work at home and had a large share in directing England's foreign policy.

After 1612 James employed favourites to carry on his Government. This was not only because he enjoyed the society of a lively companion during his leisure, but because he desired to have a person who was wholly dependent upon himself, and who could be imbued with his ideas and could then carry them out; in fact, he thought that, through favourites, he might be an absolute ruler with little trouble to himself. His first choice was singularly unfortunate—a Scotsman named *Carr*, whom he created Lord Rochester, and afterwards Earl of Somerset. Lady Essex divorced her first husband in order to marry Carr, and she and her new husband were subsequently found responsible for the murder of a distinguished man, who happened to be her personal enemy.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> An attempt has recently been made to show that there was really no Gunpowder Plot, and that the whole affair was contrived by Lord Salisbury, James I's minister, in order to discredit the Roman Catholics; but this is very unlikely.

<sup>2</sup> James used to call him familiarly his "pigmy", or his "little beagle", owing to his shortness of stature.

<sup>3</sup> His name was Overbury. He was something of a poet, and a great friend of Carr's. He had tried to prevent Carr marrying Lady Essex, and Lady Essex, in revenge, contrived to season with white arsenic the confectionery Overbury ate.



James consequently dismissed Carr from all his offices (1616), and kept him a prisoner in the Tower for the next six years.

The king's next choice was better. *George Villiers*, who eventually became *Duke of Buckingham*, had an attractive personality, with agreeable manners and a merry laugh.<sup>1</sup> He was the friend of some good people, such as Abbot and Laud, both Archbishops of Canterbury; of Bacon, who hoped through Villiers to carry out his political ideals; and even of the man who was eventually to impeach him, Sir John Eliot. Moreover, he proved himself a very fair soldier and an energetic Lord High Admiral. But his character was spoilt by his rapid rise. He was too impulsive and volatile to be a statesman; and "if it is only just", as has been said, "to class him among ministers rather than among favourites, he must rank amongst the most incapable ministers of this or any other century". At first, however, Villiers was only concerned with matters of patronage; not till towards the end of James's reign did he have much influence upon the king's policy.

Of all the people living at that time, *Francis Bacon*, the historian, essayist, and philosopher, possessed the greatest ability and the widest views. He was a strong supporter of the monarchy; but he loved it, it was said, because he expected great things from it. He saw the necessity for harmony between King and Parliament; the function of the Parliament was to keep the king informed of the wishes of his people, and of the king, through Parliament, to keep the nation informed of his policy. In the early part of James I's reign, Bacon's cousin, Lord Salisbury, prevented him having much influence, perhaps from personal jealousy or dislike. But, after Salisbury's death, Bacon became in 1613 Attorney-General, and from 1618-21 was Lord Chancellor. In those capacities he exercised much influence in the legal side of the struggle by upholding the theory that the Judges should support the king: "they shall be lions" he said, "but yet lions under the throne."

*Francis Bacon*  
(1561-1626).

<sup>1</sup> James used to call him "Steenie", from a fancied resemblance to a picture of St. Stephen.



### 3. The King and Protestant parties

We turn from the king's ministers to trace the king's policy. It was on questions of Religion that people in those days felt most acutely, and these were amongst the first to occupy James's attention on his accession. We have already noticed the upshot of his attempt to tolerate the Roman Catholics, and we must now see how he dealt with the Protestants. It may be convenient at this stage to say something of Protestant parties in seventeenth-century England. *First*, there was the *Anglican*, or, as it came to be called at the time, the *Arminian*<sup>1</sup> party, the strong party in the Church of England, of which Archbishop Laud was later to be the leader. In politics the members of this party were believers in the "divine right" of kings. In matters of Church government they were strong upholders of the power of the bishops; and they believed that the bishops, by succession from the Apostles, and the priests, through ordination by the bishops, had been given special powers. With them the Communion service was in a special sense a means of grace. Laud, by his extreme intolerance brought, in later years, much odium upon the Anglican party; and its members, partly because of their liking for vestments and a rather elaborate ritual, and partly because of the doctrines held by some of the more extreme amongst them, were suspected by their enemies of being in sympathy, if not in alliance, with the Church of Rome. But the Anglican party included among its members in the seventeenth century some singularly attractive characters, such as George Herbert, the poet, and Lancelot Andrewes, the Bishop of Winchester, and one of those chiefly responsible for the Authorized Version of the Bible; it had interests in the historic side of the English Church and in preserving its continuity from the Early Church; and it did much to improve the order and beauty of the church services throughout England.

And then, *secondly*, there were the various bodies of people we may group together under the name of *Puritan*.<sup>2</sup> In deal-

<sup>1</sup> After the name of Dr. Arminius, a Dutch divine, who died in 1609.

<sup>2</sup> These people would, however, have repudiated the name in the earlier part of the seventeenth century; indeed it was regarded as a nickname and term of reproach.



ing with the Puritans three things must be borne in mind. In the first place, many of the popular views held with regard to the Puritans are erroneous, being due to the caricatures drawn of the Puritans after the Restoration of 1660. The Puritans.

The Puritans, for instance, were not all drawn from the inferior social class; on the contrary, many of the best type of English gentlemen of that day held Puritan opinions. They were not averse to all pleasure and amusement. They did not wear their hair short, and did not speak through their noses. Secondly, we must remember that the great majority of Puritans still belonged to the Church of England; the great and final division between Churchman and Nonconformist did not come till the reign of Charles II. Thirdly, the term Puritan includes a large variety of opinions—just after the Civil War it was estimated that there were a hundred and seventy different sects, nearly all belonging to what we now call the Puritan party. Some Puritans were disposed to acquiesce, for instance, in the rule of bishops, if moderately exercised, whilst others detested and made the most violent attacks upon them. Then, especially during and after the Civil War, the Presbyterians (see p. 364) became a great force, and wished to impose their system of government by elders and their doctrines on everyone else. The Independents, however, believed in the right of every man to think for himself, and in what they called “liberty for tender consciences”, so long as those consciences were not those of Roman Catholics. And, finally, there were—as there are in every movement—various groups of extremists, who, we shall find, were a dangerous element at the time of the Commonwealth.

All classes of Puritans, however, were united on certain matters. They were all agreed, for instance, in their detestation of Roman Catholicism. It is difficult for us now to realize the intensity of the feeling of large numbers of Englishmen against the Roman Catholics, or to justify the severity of the laws against them. But we must remember that the persecutions of Queen Mary's reign were still fresh in men's minds,<sup>1</sup> that the Roman

<sup>1</sup> Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* (first published in 1563) was regarded as a sort of second Bible at this time, and was chained to the desk in a great many Parish churches; its vivid accounts helped to keep alive the memory of the Marian persecutions.



Catholics had been concerned in various plots against Elizabeth, and that the Armada was looked upon as a Popish Armada. Moreover, the Gunpowder Plot of 1605 was regarded—quite wrongly—as a plot in which the Pope and the English Roman Catholics as a body were implicated. Then, again, the Roman Catholics were not aiming merely at toleration for themselves; they were a large and increasing body, and they wanted England to become a Roman Catholic country. Lastly, it must be borne in mind that the Puritans looked upon the Pope as Antichrist, upon the ceremonies of the church which he ruled as idolatrous, upon the doctrines—to quote the House of Commons—of Popery as “devilish”, and upon its priests as “the corrupters of the people in religion and loyalty”. They would, indeed, have regarded a return to Roman Catholicism as a moral and religious catastrophe for the nation.

Apart from their hatred of the Papacy, the various sections among the Puritans had other views in common. They all opposed the claims of bishops and priests to special powers, and they disliked ornaments and vestments and an elaborate ritual in church. They were all more or less followers of Calvin; that is to say, they believed in predestination, i.e. that some are foreordained to salvation and others are not; and they looked upon the Communion as a commemorative feast in memory of our Lord's death, and not as a special means of grace. Above all, they made the Bible their rule of faith and of conduct; they had an intense feeling of responsibility towards God for all that they did, and all the power which came from the conviction that He was on their side in their struggle against what they thought was wrong.

There is, perhaps, one more point to bear in mind in dealing with religious parties in England, and for that matter in Scotland as well. No religious party, whether Roman Catholic, or Arminian, or Presbyterian, desired merely toleration for itself; they all, except perhaps the Independents, desired to persecute those who disagreed with them. Toleration, “that hellish toleration”, as a Scottish divine once called it, would satisfy few; each party wanted every other religious party exactly to conform with its own views and practices, or else to be suppressed.

Dislike of  
toleration.



It was inevitable that some of the religious opinions held by the Puritans should clash with those held by the Monarchy. Even in Elizabeth's day there was, at times, no little friction. In the early years of her reign had occurred what is known as the *Vestiarian Controversy*—clergymen with Puritan leanings objecting to wearing the surplice and to certain of the ceremonies enjoined in the Prayer Book. Then, later on, the more advanced Puritans, chiefly at Oxford and Cambridge, had advocated a Presbyterian form of government and had attacked the bishops, with the result that a dozen of them had been sent to jail. Others, again, had organized meetings, called *Prophesyings*, at which various religious subjects were discussed, and clergymen learnt how to preach sermons. But Elizabeth thought that theological discussion would provoke too much independence of thought; and she much preferred a clergyman to read to his congregation an extract from "the Book of Homilies" (which had been issued at the same time as the Prayer Book) rather than to preach to his congregation a sermon of his own composition—indeed, she thought one or two preachers quite a sufficient allowance for each county. She, therefore, disliked these clerical gatherings and sternly repressed them. And when the House of Commons, in which there was a strong Puritan element, ventured to discuss problems of ecclesiastical government or doctrine, the queen mercilessly snubbed them.

Finally, in 1583, *Whitgift* became Archbishop of Canterbury. He was a stern disciplinarian, and had the queen's complete confidence.<sup>1</sup> The Press was muzzled, no manuscript being allowed to be set up in type without the licence of the Archbishop or the Bishop of London. This regulation did not prevent, however, some gross libels on the bishops, known as the "Mar-Prelate Tracts", from being secretly printed, the authors of which were never discovered; but some other libellers were caught and were put to death. To the Court of High Commission was delegated by the queen the punishment of ecclesiastical offences, and, armed with tremendous powers, it persecuted the more advanced exponents of the Puritan

<sup>1</sup> The queen used to call him "her little black husband", and treated him as her confessor to whom she revealed "the very secrets of her soul".



doctrines. *The Brownists* (so called because of their leader Robert Browne), who held opinions then considered very extreme and had seceded from the Church, were especially attacked, and a large number took refuge in Holland, whence many returned to make the famous voyage in *The Mayflower* to America in 1620.

The Puritans, however, on James's accession were inclined to be well-disposed to him, for they expected much from him.

James had been brought up in Presbyterian Scotland, and the Puritans believed that his attitude towards them would be sympathetic. They consequently lost no time in presenting him with a Millenary Petition

*The Hampton Court Conference, 1604.*

—so called because it was supposed to be signed by a thousand ministers<sup>1</sup>—asking for certain reforms. A conference, which included the two archbishops and six bishops on the one side and four Puritans on the other, was held at *Hampton Court* to consider the situation (1604).

The king himself presided and behaved at first with admirable impartiality. Then, at the end of the second day, a Puritan mentioned the word "Presbytery". Now James, though the Puritans did not know it, hated the Presbyterian form of religion, with its outspokenness and its democratic government, as he had experienced it in Scotland. "A Scottish Presbytery," he said, "agreeth as well with a monarchy as God with the devil. Then Jack and Tom and Will and Dick shall meet, and at their pleasure censure me and my council."<sup>2</sup> The Conference soon broke up, and its only result—though it was a very important result—was the preparation of the Authorized Version of the Bible (which appeared in 1611); the Puritans otherwise went away disappointed and empty-handed. James himself became a strong supporter of the extreme Anglican position, and a strong believer in the maxim "No bishop, no king"; if once the authority of the bishops was overthrown, that of the monarchy itself, he felt, would be threatened.

<sup>1</sup> As a matter of fact it was not signed at all, though it had received the support of eight hundred ministers.

<sup>2</sup> "Stay, I pray you," James went on, "for one seven years, and if then you find me pursy and fat, and my windpipes stuffed, I will perhaps hearken unto you; for let that government be once up, I am sure I shall be kept in breath."



#### 4. The King and Parliament

The Puritans, if they found no favour with the Monarchy, found plenty of support in the House of Commons. In every Parliament of James I and Charles I, and to an increasing extent as the years went on, there was a strong Puritan element in the Lower House, and eventually that element became supreme. <sup>Puritanism and Parliament.</sup> It is this fact that largely accounts for the differences between the first two Stuart kings and their Parliaments. The Lower House was fanatically anti-Catholic; the two kings were inclined to be tolerant to the Catholics, James because he was naturally of a tolerant disposition and Charles because he had married a Roman Catholic wife. The Crown supported the Anglican or Arminian position in the English Church; the majority in the House of Commons was strongly opposed to the Arminian doctrines and regarded with considerable suspicion all the king's High Church appointments.

There were, however, many other causes besides religious differences for the struggle round which centres the chief interest of the seventeenth century, the struggle between King and Parliament. Of these we must say something before tracing the history of the struggle in detail. One cause of the struggle undoubtedly was the absence of external danger, already referred to in the last chapter. It is often said that an Englishman can only think of one thing at a time. For a great part of Elizabeth's reign his mind was taken up with dangers from abroad. When Elizabeth's life alone stood between her subjects and anarchy or a foreign domination, it was no time to discuss rights and privileges. But by 1603 these dangers were over. <sup>Causes of struggle between King and Parliament.</sup> The defeat of the Armada in 1588 meant the destruction not only of Philip's ambitions, but also of the Tudor dictatorship—for it was no longer required. Englishmen might, therefore, safely devote themselves to criticizing and reforming their own government.

Another cause of the struggle was the development, during the sixteenth century, of the national character. That century, it has been said, saw the birth of the modern Englishman. He had realized his possibilities in enterprise, in seamanship, in



literature; the Reformation and the Renaissance had taught him to think and to reason for himself; he had become more self-reliant, more self-confident, perhaps more self-willed. He was, in a word, ready for a greater share in the government of his country. And more especially had come the development of the middle classes. The battle of English liberty in the seventeenth century was fought, not so much by the nobles or by the people, as by the squire, the merchant, and the lawyer; these were the classes which had developed in Tudor times, and it was from these classes that the members of the House of Commons were drawn. Very often they were ignorant, especially about foreign affairs; sometimes they did not realize the difficulties of the Government and brought absurd charges against the ministers. But they were men, for the most part, uncorrupted and incorruptible; independent and yet moderate; patient though very persistent. In the earlier stages of the struggle the lawyers chiefly fought the war of words in the House of Commons; they were, as Bacon said, the "vowels" of the House, the remaining members merely the "consonants". But when it came to the war of swords, it was the country gentlemen who made the best use of them.

England, then, was not distracted by foreign dangers; and she had developed a class of citizens who could think and act for themselves. Even during Elizabeth's reign the relations between the queen and her Parliaments were not always perfectly harmonious. It is true that only eleven Parliaments were called, and that hardly any outlived a single session of some six weeks' duration; and that Elizabeth, as she frankly stated on one occasion, called them "not to make new laws<sup>1</sup> or lose good hours in idle speeches", but to provide supplies for the expenses of her government. Nevertheless, on occasions the House of Commons had exhibited an independent and almost pugnacious temper, which indicated that the nation would not continue to look on quietly while the Crown and its ministers governed, and that it was time for a reconsideration of their respective rights and duties. With James I that reconsideration came, and it was significant that at the

<sup>1</sup> The queen was no believer in new laws, and in one year she vetoed no less than forty-eight out of the ninety-one bills which had been passed by both Houses of Parliament.



opening of his first Parliament there was a record attendance. The time had come, as the House of Commons declared in the very first year of James's reign,—to “redress, restore, and rectify” those actions which in the reign of Elizabeth they had “passed over”. Questions of government, plain and broad questions, pressed for an answer.

There were questions of theory which went to the foundation of all authority. By what title did the King hold his throne? By hereditary divine right, as the King and the bishops and many others believed, or by virtue of an Act of Parliament? If the King ruled by divine right, criticism either of his words or of his actions was obviously wrong; a subject must yield passive obedience to a divinely appointed ruler. Or again, what is meant by the King's *Prerogative*? The King's party held that it was a sort of reserve power residing in the King to do ultimately what he liked; to override, if he thought reasons of State demanded it, all the ordinary laws of the land. The Parliament party held, on the other hand, that law was the ground of all authority, and that the King possessed his powers by law, and must at all times be regulated by law. Where, again, did sovereignty reside? Did it rest with the King alone, or with the King and Parliament combined?

It is obvious that all the practical questions that arose, such as those concerning the power of the King to raise money without the consent of Parliament, and to imprison people without trial, or the power of the Parliament to call ministers to account for their actions, depended upon an answer to these questions. Nor were the answers at all clear. The powers of the monarchy were ill-defined, and the English Constitution was neither then nor at any other time of a rigid type. The King's party had just as decided opinions as the Parliamentary party; and both could bring strong arguments in support of their respective views. And as time went on, the differences between these views became irreconcilable; till at last the sword—and the sword alone—could settle them.

“I found Parliaments when I came here,” said James once, “so I had to put up with them.” One can sympathize with the king, for it is obvious that the Stuarts succeeded to an exceed-



ingly difficult situation in regard to their Parliaments. But James, instead of relieving the situation, merely aggravated it. A wise man once said that the rights of kings and peoples never agree so well together as in silence. James, however, was both loquacious and pedantic. He was always wanting to define matters of government which had much better be left undefined, and to theorise concerning powers which he might have exercised, in practice, without notice, but which, uncompromisingly enun-  
ciated, were bound to provoke opposition.

We have no space to enter into the details of James's relations with his Parliaments, but we may take, as an example of his tact-

lessness, an incident which occurred at the opening of his *first* Parliament (1604). The King's court had disallowed the election to the House of Commons of a man called Godwin, on the ground that he was an outlaw, and that James in a proclamation had said that no outlaws were to be elected. The House of Commons declared that it was their privilege to settle disputed elections. James answered that their privileges were his grant and ought not to be quoted against him, and a controversy at once ensued as to the origin of parliamentary privileges and the king's power to abrogate them. In the end James allowed the House of Commons to settle the matter of the election; but it was not an auspicious beginning.<sup>1</sup>

In the first Parliament of James I, also, an extremely important question of taxation was brought up. The ordinary revenue

of the king was derived partly from independent sources, such as crown lands and feudal dues, bringing in about £250,000 a year; and partly from a duty on all imports called tunnage and poundage,<sup>2</sup> a duty which was granted to the king on his accession for the term of his life, and which brought in about £150,000 a year. Two or three years after his accession, James began to impose, on certain articles, extra duties over and above what he was allowed to impose by

<sup>1</sup> "The state of monarchy", James said to his Parliament in 1611, "is the supremest thing upon earth; for kings are not only God's lieutenants upon earth and sit upon God's throne, but even by God Himself they are called Gods; as to dispute what God may do is blasphemy, so it is sedition in subjects to dispute what a king may do in the height of his power." This is another example of the king's loquacious tactlessness.

<sup>2</sup> So called because a certain sum was paid on every tun of wine and pound of merchandise imported.



tunnage and poundage. A merchant called *Bate* refused to pay the extra duty on currants, which was one of these articles. But the judges decided that he must pay not only because the ports—the gateways to the kingdom—belonged to the king, but also because it was the king's right and duty to regulate trade in what ways he thought desirable for the good of the State (1606). The result of this decision was that the Government imposed extra duties upon a whole mass of other articles as well, and the king's revenue was increased. These extra duties, known as "Impositions", were, of course, a constant source of contention, and were strenuously opposed by this and other Parliaments.

The king dissolved his first Parliament in 1611, and for the next ten years there was no Parliament except in 1614, when one sat for two months; it is known in history as the "Addled Parliament" because no laws resulted from it. But in 1621 the loss of the Palatinate by Frederick, and the possibility that England might be engaged in a war for its recovery, led James to call his *third Parliament*. This Parliament was very important. In the first place the House of Commons revived its right of impeachment, its right to prosecute the king's ministers or office holders before the House of Lords. This was a weapon of tremendous power which had not been used since 1459; and it was a weapon which later on was to be used with great frequency. The House of Commons began by impeaching some holders of monopolies. It went on to accuse the Lord Chancellor, Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam, of receiving bribes. Suitors in those days often used to give presents to judges. But there is no doubt also that Bacon had in some cases, probably through carelessness, received presents before he had given his decision, and that these presents were given with a corrupt intention; there is no proof, however, that Bacon received them as bribes or that they in any way influenced his decision.<sup>1</sup> We may agree with Bacon's own judg-

<sup>1</sup> In one case, a lady, who had a series of suits being heard before Bacon, drove down to York House, Bacon's residence, with £100 in her purse. "What is that," said Bacon on her entrance, "that you have in your hand?" "A purse of my own making," was the lady's reply, "which I hope your lordship will accept." "What Lord," replied Bacon, "could refuse a purse of so fair a lady's working?" But, as a matter of fact, though Bacon took the purse and the £100, his final decision was not at all in favour of this lady litigant.



ment: "I was the justest judge that was in England these fifty years. But it was the justest censure in Parliament that was these two hundred years." Bacon was deprived of his chancellorship and died shortly afterwards.

In the second place, this House of Commons upheld its liberty of speech. The House of Commons was strongly, almost fanatically, anti-Catholic and anti-Spaniard, and it met at the time that James was proposing a marriage between Charles and a Spanish princess with a view to the restoration of the Palatinate. It accordingly drew up a petition to be presented to the king, in which it begged that Charles might marry one of "our own religion", and expressed with some bluntness its opinion of the Pope and his "dearest son" the King of Spain. Such a petition coming in the crisis of his negotiations with Spain was, from the king's point of view, exceedingly embarrassing; and James wrote an angry letter against the "fiery and popular spirits" in the House of Commons who had dared "to argue or debate publicly matters far above their reach and capacity", and forbade the House "henceforth to meddle with anything concerning our Government or deep matters of State". Fortunately for English liberty, the House of Commons maintained its courage; and in the candle light on a dark December day, it drew up a Protestation declaring its freedom of speech. The king thereupon dissolved the Parliament, imprisoned some of its members, and sending for the journal book of the House of Commons tore the Protestation out of it with his own hands (1622). But, nevertheless, the House of Commons had shown there was one place in the kingdom where an Englishman might say what he liked.

In the *fourth* Parliament (1624) we pass into smooth waters, for Parliament had got the war with Spain which it desired. Moreover, Buckingham and Prince Charles supported the House of Commons in their impeachment of Middlesex, the Lord Treasurer. Shortly afterwards James died (1625).

This brief summary will have shown that the rift had begun between the Crown and Parliament in the reign of King James. The House of Commons had made a decided advance; it had revived impeachment, upheld its privileges, and protested against



impositions. James's character, it must be admitted, had been peculiarly fitted to open dangerous questions; in the reign of his successor they would have to be answered.

## XXVII. Charles I and Domestic Affairs, 1625-42

It will be apparent from what has been already said that Charles succeeded to no easy inheritance. He had been left an incompetent and impetuous minister in Buckingham, and unfortunately that minister had more influence in Charles's reign than he had enjoyed even in the later years of King James. At home there was an empty treasury and a Parliament which was beginning to feel its power; and abroad, things were going badly for the Protestants in the Thirty Years' War. Moreover, Charles's wife was to be of no assistance to him. Soon after his accession he married *Henrietta Maria*, daughter of the French king, a vivacious and attractive person; but, unfortunately, as time went on, she interfered more and more in affairs of State, and had more and more influence over her husband. The queen was quite ignorant of English customs and the English character. She was a Roman Catholic in a strongly Protestant country, and was always striving to obtain concessions for those of her own religion. She actively intrigued, in times of difficulty at home, for assistance from abroad; and she held the most extreme political opinions with regard to the king's authority and the wickedness of those who opposed it.<sup>1</sup>

### 1. Charles and his first three Parliaments, 1625-9

Charles called three Parliaments during the first four years of his reign, and quarrelled with each one of them. Then for

<sup>1</sup> "Of the many women, good and bad," it has been said, "who have tried to take part in affairs of State, from Cleopatra, or the Queen of Sheba downward, nobody by character or training was ever worse fitted than the wife of Charles I for such a case as that in which she found herself."



eleven years he governed without a Parliament. Finally, a war with Scotland and the consequent need of money forced him in 1640 to call two Parliaments, the second of which reduced his powers, and eventually civil war broke out in 1642. Such is briefly the history of Charles's relations with his Parliaments. The subjects of dispute were many. There was, as in James's reign, the religious difficulty. Charles was an Anglican High Churchman, and because of his wife was inclined to tolerate the Roman Catholics; Parliament was Puritan and anti-Catholic. Parliament distrusted the king's ministers, Buckingham in the first four years, and Strafford and Laud in 1640; the king, on the contrary, thought these ministers able and efficient, and any parliamentary criticisms of them factious and impertinent. Parliament, in the early years of Charles's reign, was angry at the failure of the English foreign policy; and in later years, because of the Court intrigues with foreign powers.

But underlying all these disputes lay the questions indicated in the last chapter: Where did sovereignty reside? Who had the responsibility for the government of the country? The Parliament wanted, rightly or wrongly, a greater control of the government; Charles, rightly or wrongly, was unwilling to concede it—there lay the whole difficulty. We regard it now as an easy task to bring the powers of Crown and Parliament into harmony. But this dual control was not easy to arrange, and perhaps was impossible to obtain without friction. As a matter of fact, a Civil War occurred in 1642 and a Revolution in 1688 before an arrangement could be made—and even then it proved not to be permanent.

Charles's *first Parliament* met in 1625,<sup>1</sup> just after the king had arranged to pay very large subsidies to the King of Denmark and to send a fleet to attack Spain. Obviously large sums would be required. But Charles's reticence and want of frankness proved a fatal impediment. There were no Bluebooks or Whitebooks and no daily newspapers in those days, and it was difficult for members of Parliament to know

<sup>1</sup> Even an outbreak of the plague in London did not prevent an attendance at the opening of Charles's first Parliament which beat the record established when James I came to the throne.



what was going on. Though members knew, of course, that a great religious war was in progress in Germany, and were anxious that England should help the Protestants, they were yet unfamiliar with recent developments. But Charles would neither explain his policy, nor depute anyone else to do so. "Consequently, as one member said, "They knew not their enemy", and the statement was literally true. Nor did Charles explain his needs; he made a definite demand for the navy, but only hinted at the largeness of the sums he really required. Consequently Charles only got one-seventh of the amount of money which he needed.

At the same time Parliament only granted tunnage and poundage to the king for one year, though for the last two centuries it had been granted the king for life. Here Parliament was wrong. The Monarchy could not get on without the money. It had to meet the ordinary expenses of government; moreover, the Court spent more money than in Elizabeth's day, whilst the great rise in prices, owing to the influx of silver from the New World, had made the king's revenue worth less than before. The decision, however, in Bate's case (p. 353) made it legal for Charles to go on levying the customs without Parliamentary sanction, and he accordingly did so. In this, as in the succeeding Parliaments, the Puritan majority had apprehensions about religion, for the king favoured Anglican High Churchmen such as Laud,<sup>1</sup> and also allowed the administration of the laws against the Roman Catholics to become somewhat lax.

Charles's *second Parliament* met in 1626, after the loan of ships to the French king and the disaster to the Cadiz fleet had occurred. The House of Commons first demanded that an inquiry into the Cadiz disaster should precede any grant of supply, and wanted especially to investigate Buckingham's conduct. Charles held that he and not Parliament must be the judge of the capacity of his ministers: "I would not have the House to question my servants," he said, "much less one who is so near me." The House of Commons then went a step further, and under Eliot's leader-

The second Parliament, 1626; Buckingham's impeachment.

<sup>1</sup> Laud supplied the king with a list of clergy marked either O for Orthodox or P for Puritan, so that only those might receive promotion whom Laud considered Orthodox.



ship impeached Buckingham. *Sir John Eliot* was a Cornishman, a man of lofty nature, and a great orator, but apt—as those possessing the qualities of an orator often are—to exaggerate, and take either a better or a worse view of a man than he deserved. In 1625 he had expressed a hope to Buckingham that he might be “wholly devoted to the contemplation of his excellencies”. But in the next year, when he saw, as he said, “our honour ruined, our ships sunk, our men perished, not by the sword, not by the enemy, not by chance, but by those we trust”, his indignation knew no bounds. In a speech of wonderful power he applied to Buckingham the words in which Tacitus characterized Sejanus<sup>1</sup>: *Sui obtegens, in alios criminator; juxta adulatione et superbia*. “If he is Sejanus, I must be Tiberius,” was Charles’s comment on this comparison, and he never forgave Eliot as a consequence. Buckingham’s impeachment led Charles to dissolve the second Parliament.

The *third Parliament* met two years later, in 1628. Charles was needlessly rude in his first speech. If the Parliament did not supply his wants, he must, he said, use all means which God had put into his hands. “Take not this as a threat,” he added, “for I scorn to threaten any but my equals.” This was an unpromising beginning; but Parliament had more important causes of dissatisfaction than the king’s speech. The Rhé expedition had failed. Parliament was still nervous about religion. Moreover, the king had recently levied a forced loan. But this was not all. Five knights had refused to pay the forced loan, and had been imprisoned. When brought up in a court of law, the justification for their imprisonment had been given as “the special command of the king”. The Crown lawyers argued before the judges that the king must have, for the safety of the State, the power to commit people to, and to keep them in, prison without trial. That is true enough; but the danger was, as it has been well said, that the king was making the medicine of the constitution its daily food. Moreover, the knights’ lawyers held that such a power as the king claimed was plainly contrary to an Englishman’s liberty and to

<sup>1</sup> Sejanus was governor of the praetorian troops, and for many years controlled the policy of the Emperor Tiberius.



Magna Carta. The judges before whom the case was tried had given no definite ruling in such a difficult matter, though they had refused to release the knights from prison.

The third Parliament lost no time in trying to check what was held to be an abuse of the king's power, and drew up the *Petition of Right*. The first article declared that loans and taxes without consent of Parliament were illegal, and the second that all arbitrary imprisonment without cause shown was illegal. The third article of this petition forbade the billeting of soldiers in private houses;<sup>1</sup> and the fourth, the exercise, in time of peace, of martial law, which too often had meant no law at all. The king, after trying every means of evasion, finally gave his consent to this petition; and, though he violated every one of its articles, the *Petition* stands as a great landmark in the struggle.

The *Petition of Right*, 1628.

It was after the *Petition* was passed that Wentworth, who had been one of the chief leaders of the House of Commons, joined the King. The second session of the third Parliament met in 1629. Parliament maintained that the king had not kept his promises with regard to the *Petition of Right*, and dissensions between King and Parliament grew more bitter. Charles determined to dissolve Parliament, but before he could do so occurred the celebrated scene when, with the Speaker held down in the chair and the doors locked, three resolutions were passed, declaring that whoever proposed innovations in religion, and whoever either proposed or paid taxes without the consent of Parliament, was an enemy to the kingdom and a betrayer of its liberties. These three resolutions—combining the grievances which the House of Commons felt in religion and in politics—were the last that the third Parliament (1629) was to pass, for it was at once dissolved; and Eliot, the most noble-minded of all in that struggle, was put into the Tower and died there.<sup>2</sup>

The dissolution of Parliament, 1629.

<sup>1</sup> Soldiers, raised for an expedition abroad, were sometimes billeted in private houses, and were not infrequently an intolerable nuisance. Some people in Essex complained, for instance, that the Irish quartered there broke the furniture, and threw the meat into the fire if it did not win their approval.

<sup>2</sup> Eliot's son petitioned that the body might be buried at Port Eliot, the Cornish home of the family. But Charles was implacable. "Let Sir John Eliot", wrote the king on the petition, "be buried in the church of that parish where he died"; and accordingly he was buried in the Tower.



We have now come to the end of the first period of the conflict. On the whole, though Parliament was sometimes unduly suspicious, sometimes rather niggardly in its supplies, and always intolerant in matters of religion, it had shown itself more patient, more practical, more clear-headed than either the kings or their advisers, and it is difficult to resist the conclusion that it was in the right. But this must not blind us to the fact that Parliament was seeking to establish a control over the King and his advisers which had not been exercised in Tudor times, and it was not unnatural that the Crown should resist such attempts.

## 2. Arbitrary Government, 1629-40, and growing discontent in England and Scotland

The next eleven years saw no Parliament—the longest interval England has known in her history since Parliament began.

They are usually called "*The Eleven Years' Tyranny*". We must, however, beware of regarding a year without a Parliament as anything exceptional; in Elizabeth's reign, for instance, Parliament on the average met only every third year. Nor must we regard Charles as a wicked despot, destroying the rights, the goods, and the lives of his people. The period, on the contrary, was one of prosperity for the nation at large; with the exception of Eliot, no political martyr lost his life; and the king, on the whole, kept within the letter of the law as it was interpreted for him by judges, who might, however, with reason be deemed somewhat accommodating.<sup>1</sup> Yet none the less they were dangerous and critical years for England; and when they were over, the people of England showed that they were determined that a repetition of such absolute rule should not occur.

We must say something about the advisers of Charles during this period. No one succeeded to Buckingham's commanding position in Charles's councils. Yet amongst the king's advisers two figures stand out pre-eminent —*Thomas Wentworth*, eventually created *Earl of Strafford*, and *William Laud*. Wentworth, a member of an old

<sup>1</sup> The judges also would be likely to be on the side of the Crown, for lawyers go by the latest precedent, and would maintain that the Stuarts might well do as the Tudors had done.



family with large estates in Yorkshire, had supported the Crown when he first entered the House of Commons; but in the early Parliaments of Charles I he was one of the leading critics of the king's policy, and the Petition of Right in particular was largely due to his initiative. Then between the two sessions of the third Parliament he joined the king's side, and was made a peer (1628). For this change Wentworth has been unsparingly attacked, called a political apostate, the First of the Rats, and compared to Lucifer.<sup>1</sup> And, indeed, it is impossible to deny that Wentworth was inconsistent, that he did things when in authority which he would have been the first to condemn when in opposition, or that self-interest was probably one of the motives which influenced him.

Wentworth, however, was one of those strong, masterful, able people who have an unlimited confidence in their own capacity, and very little in that of anyone else. He had been with the Opposition because he distrusted Buckingham and specially disliked his foreign enterprises, and because of the arbitrary acts which the Government had committed. But he was never really of the Opposition; he had no sympathy with the Puritan leanings of the majority, and felt contempt for many of his fellow-members. Moreover, he was no believer in Parliamentary government—government, in his view, was to be for the people, but not by them. To him princes were, to use his own expression, the “indulgent nursing-fathers to their people”, and the authority of a king “the keystone which closeth up the arch of order and government”. And only by allying himself with the king could he show, it must be remembered, his capacity for administration. Wentworth therefore joined the king, and was made President of the North in 1628, which gave him the control of the northern counties. In 1632 he became Lord Deputy of Ireland, and it was in Ireland that he was to exhibit the strength and weakness of his statesmanship (see p. 426). Then in the summer of 1639 he became Charles I's principal adviser, and quickly made himself the most hated man in England.

Wentworth's great friend was *Laud*. He and Laud were alike in that energy and whole-hearted devotion to the king's

<sup>1</sup> See Lord Macaulay's *Essay on Hallam's History*.



service, and in that determination to get things done which was expressed in their letters to one another by their watchword "Thorough". Laud had been President of St. John's College, Oxford, then Bishop of St. David's; in 1628 he became Bishop of London, and five years later Archbishop of Canterbury. It was Laud who directed the ecclesiastical policy of the Government. In that policy there is much that can be praised. Large sums of money were spent in the erection and restoration of churches. Order and decency were enforced in the Church services. Laud made, through deputies, a visitation of all the dioceses in his archbishopric, and found much to amend: the chapter of a cathedral neglecting to preach and often absent; the aisle of one church being used by the bailiff of a local lord to melt the lead which had been stripped from the roof; the aisle of another being used for cock-fighting, the vicar himself being present.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, Laud was no respecter of persons, and attacked wrongdoing in however high quarters it might be discovered.

But, with all his energy and goodness, Laud was unsympathetic and narrow-minded, a man who thought that everyone must believe in the High Church doctrines which he believed in, whether he be English, Irish, Scot, or even French or Spaniard. Through his control of the Press he tried to stop the publication of all views antagonistic to his own. But it was especially in the Courts of Star Chamber and High Commission that Laud made his evil reputation.<sup>2</sup> Laud, with his sharp tongue and irritable temper, always voted for the biggest punishment upon theological offenders, and it was chiefly due to him that such barbarous punishments were inflicted as flogging and branding and the cutting off of ears. If Laud saved the Church of England, as in Mr. Gladstone's judgment he did, from being bound in the fetters of an iron system of compulsory and Calvinistic belief, he was also responsible for driving the moderate Protestants into the arms of the Puritans.

<sup>1</sup> Laud also stopped St. Paul's Cathedral being used as a club for gossip by the men of fashion, or as a playground by those of more tender years, and he insisted that people should not come into church with their hats on.

<sup>2</sup> These courts had been established, the one in the reign of Henry VII and the other in that of Elizabeth; they tried a man in secret, without a jury, and made prisoners give evidence against themselves.



The difficulties of Charles were mainly financial, for his income from Crown lands and feudal dues, from tunnage and poundage and Impositions was insufficient. He had therefore to find other sources. Thus he caused all those who held lands by feudal tenure or of a certain value—over £40 a year—to become knights and to pay fees for the honour, or else to be fined for refusing it. He fined nobles and others whose ancestors had encroached—perhaps hundreds of years before—on the limits of the Crown forests. Various companies, on paying certain annual payments, were granted monopolies of the commonest articles of use, such as bricks, salt, and soap.<sup>1</sup> Then the Navy was very weak; Barbary corsairs had actually landed and wintered in Dorset in the winter of 1624–25. So, in 1634, Charles levied a tax called *ship-money* from the maritime towns and counties. For this tax there were many precedents in time of war, but now Charles imposed it in time of peace. A year later, he issued a “second writ of ship-money”, as it was called, and levied it from the whole country—a very unpopular move.

Up till 1637, though there had been great dissatisfaction, there was little resistance to the king. With that year, however, the struggle began—it has been well called the first year of the Revolutionary Epoch. Popular feeling had the opportunity of showing itself in *June*. Prynne, a lawyer, Burton, a clergyman, and Bastwick, a doctor, were sentenced, for attacks on the bishops,<sup>2</sup> to lose their ears, to be fined £5000, and to be imprisoned for life. They suffered the first part of this sentence in Palace Yard. Prynne<sup>3</sup> had already lost part of his ears for an attack upon the stage four years previously, but his case had then aroused little interest. Now,

The beginning of the Crisis, 1637.

<sup>1</sup> In Tudor times it was the business of the State to regulate trade; and Charles I in much that he did merely carried out the Tudor system. Thus the Star Chamber was used to proceed against Corn Engrossers, and real attempts were made to find sensible work for the unemployed. So also the monopoly system was part of the scheme of Paternal economic government. The real difficulties were, first, that Charles from want of money abused the system; and, second, that the English people were becoming more and more Individualistic in outlook.

<sup>2</sup> The bishops, Bastwick had written, were the enemies of God and the king, and the Church which they governed was as full of ceremonies as a dog is full of fleas.

<sup>3</sup> During the course of his life he wrote two hundred books and pamphlets. He wrote all day, his servant bringing him every three hours a roll and a pot of ale “to refocillate his wasted spirits”.



however, all London came to show its sympathy. His path and that of his fellow sufferers was strewn with flowers, many people wept, and there was an angry yell when Prynne's ears—or what remained of them—were sawn off. Then in *November*, 1637, came the famous trial of John Hampden. The king had issued a third writ of ship-money, and it looked as if he was going, without Parliamentary sanction, to make it a permanent tax. Hampden, a Buckinghamshire squire of importance, refused to pay. The case was heard, and the judges decided by seven to five that ship-money was legal. The case aroused intense interest, and the arguments of Hampden's lawyers were circulated over the entire kingdom. In the same year the opinions of the greatest literary figure of the period on Laud's rule were shown in the writing by Milton of *Lycidas*.

In Scotland, however, even more than in England, the year 1637 is one of importance.

During the lifetime of *John Knox* (died 1572) it seemed as if the Scottish Church might ultimately accept a modified form of Episcopacy, but under *Andrew Melville*, who succeeded John Knox, the view prevailed that all ministers were of equal status, and *Presbyteries* were erected to perform the administrative duties formerly associated with bishops. The Scottish Church thus became definitely Presbyterian in its government. Under this system there are four Church Courts. Each congregation has its *Kirk Session* consisting of the minister and elders, both elected by the congregation. The congregations are grouped into sixty *Presbyteries*, each congregation being represented on the Presbyterial court by its minister and one elder. Three or more Presbyteries compose a *Provincial Synod*, twelve in number, meeting twice a year. The supreme court of the Church, the *General Assembly*, meets once a year. Its members are ministers and elders elected by the Presbyteries.

On to this Presbyterian system James Sixth of Scotland (First of England) sought to graft bishops.<sup>1</sup> He, and, after him,

<sup>1</sup> Bishops were popular neither in Scotland nor in England. Thus one English writer calls the bishops "not the pillars but the caterpillars of the Church"; another in a parody of the Litany says: "From plague, pestilence, and famine, from bishops, priests, and deacons, good



Charles I, believed in the Divine Right of Kings, while the people of Scotland believed no less ardently in the Divine Right of the General Assembly, and denied the right of the civil authority to interfere in any way in the affairs of the Church. The General Assembly had influence that extended beyond ecclesiastical affairs, and was, in fact, a representative body which was the centre of opposition to royal despotism.

Policy of  
James VI.

On the other hand the Scottish Parliament, or Council of Estates, was a feudal assembly whose business was controlled by the "*Lords of the Articles*", in the nomination of whom the king had a large say. Therefore conflict between Crown and Church was almost inevitable. King James showed much tenacity of purpose, and by 1612 he had fully established Episcopacy in Scotland, without, however, abolishing the Presbyterian Courts. He then sought to modify the forms of worship, and by diplomacy and intimidation the General Assembly was induced to pass, in 1618, what were called, from the place of meeting, the *Five Articles of Perth*. Of these Articles, perhaps the most unpopular was the enforcement of kneeling at Communion, which savoured to the Scottish mind of idolatry.

Church  
and  
State.

Five  
Articles  
of Perth,  
1618.

Charles came to the throne in 1625, and in twelve years had united the whole nation against him. To begin with, his marriage with a Roman Catholic met with much unfavourable comment. Then he frightened the nobles by an attempt to recover some of the lands which they had obtained from the Church at the Reformation. Finally he aroused the anger of the whole people by his determination to establish complete uniformity with the Church of England by doing away with the Presbyterian courts and by imposing a new Prayer Book similar to the English Prayer Book. The particulars in which it differed from the English Prayer Book were universally held to be due to the influence of Archbishop Laud, and to be in a Popish direction. "It was," said a contemporary, "a Popish-English-Scottish-Mass-Service-Book."

Charles I  
and the  
new Service  
Book, 1637.

Lord, deliver us". The Scots are not behindhand—one calls the bishops "beastlie bellie-gods" regardless of the fact that some bishops, at all events, lived ascetic lives and were decidedly spare of frame; and another characterizes them as "bunchy knobs of papist flesh".

(c 271)

24-25\*



Laud's Liturgy was used for the first time in St. Giles' Cathedral, Edinburgh, on Sunday, July 23, 1637, and provoked a riot—traditionally stated to have been started by a

Riot in  
St. Giles,  
1637.

woman called Jenny Geddes—which was really the beginning of a revolution. Charles might have retrieved the situation by withdrawing the Service Book, but this he refused to do. Then opposition to the Prayer Book grew into a demand for the abolition of Episcopacy, and a zealous Presbyterian organization known as "The Tables" was practically ruling Scotland in defiance of King and Council. Still Charles persisted, and in 1638 opposition to him culminated in the *National Covenant*. The National Covenant was first signed

The National  
Covenant,  
1638.

in Greyfriars Churchyard on March 1, 1638, and copies were sent all over Scotland. Everywhere it was signed with the utmost enthusiasm, the signatories pledging themselves "to adhere to and defend the true religion", by which they meant Protestantism in general, and the Presbyterian Church in particular.

This at last awakened Charles to the seriousness of the situation. He offered to withdraw the Service Book and to

The Glasgow  
Assembly,  
1638.

permit a free General Assembly and a free Parliament to meet. But it was too late. When the General Assembly met in Glasgow in November, only Covenanters were admitted to membership, and Hamilton, the Royal Commissioner, seeing that the Assembly would demand his assent to Acts abolishing Episcopacy, dissolved it in the name of the King. But the Assembly continued to sit, though an unconstitutional body, and with great gusto annulled the Five Articles of Perth, cancelled the Service Book, deposed the bishops, abolished Episcopacy, and reintroduced strict Presbyterianism.

Naturally the King refused to sanction the Acts of this Assembly, and it was clear that war was inevitable. It broke out in 1639

First  
Bishops'  
War, 1639.

and was known as the *First Bishops' War*. The Covenanters under David Leslie, "that old, little, crooked soldier", a veteran of many Continental campaigns, took up position on Duns Law, near Berwick. The king came north with a force, miserable in numbers and equipment, and could do nothing but agree, by the *Pacification of Berwick*, to



the Scottish demands, the chief of which was that another General Assembly should meet. This did meet in August, and all the measures of the Glasgow Assembly were again passed. In addition, the Assembly passed a new Act making the signing of the Covenant compulsory on the whole nation. All these Acts of Assembly received the royal assent, but Charles, who was as determined as ever to have his own way, refused to sanction the parliamentary measures necessary to make them legally enforceable. The situation was, therefore, unchanged, and in 1640 the *Second Bishops' War* broke out. The meeting of the Short Parliament in England showed the Scots that they had no reason to fear that the English nation would support Charles, and they accordingly invaded England and marched to Newcastle-on-Tyne. Charles met Scottish representatives at Ripon, and had no alternative but to agree to the continued occupation of Newcastle till a settlement could be reached. In August, 1641, he granted all the Scottish demands, and paid the expenses of the army at Newcastle, which amounted to £850 a day, and the Scots went home. In September, Charles visited Edinburgh in the hope of obtaining Scottish help against the rapidly growing opposition of the English Parliament. He was most gracious, yielding to all Scottish demands, and lavishing honours and other signs of favour on the leading Covenanters, but he failed in his main purpose. His actions at this time, however, had this effect, that, when the Civil War did break out, Scotland had no quarrel with him, and had no call to support either side. Nevertheless, by this time the Covenanters were dreaming a new dream. They dreamed of uniformity of Church government in England and Scotland, not on the Episcopal model as Charles had hoped, but on the Presbyterian model; and they now worked to help bring about that consummation.

Second  
Bishops'  
War, 1640.

Charles in  
Scotland,  
1641.

### 3. The Short and the Long Parliament, 1640-42

We must now trace the influence of Scottish affairs upon English politics. The Scottish rebellion, it has been said, gave back



to England her Parliamentary system. For eleven years Charles had done without Parliament. But the money he had was only

just enough for current expenses; any extra strain would break down Charles's system and make a Parliament inevitable. After the First Bishops' War

was over Strafford arrived in England, and, by his advice, in order to obtain funds to renew the war with Scotland, a Parliament was summoned. That Parliament—called the *Short Parliament*—met in *April, 1640*, and it lasted but three weeks. The king tried to bargain for subsidies in return for giving up ship-money, but he failed; and Parliament, when it proceeded to petition for a peaceful settlement with Scotland, was dissolved. This Parliament brought to the front a Somersetshire squire named *Pym*, who was to show himself a great Parliamentarian. He was a clear and cogent speaker, a clever tactician, and the possessor of unbounded energy. In a speech of two hours—an exceptionally long speech for that period—he attacked the misgovernment of the king, and summed up his political creed by declaring that “the powers of Parliament are to the body politic as the rational faculties of the soul to a man”. And he quickly achieved for himself a position which led his enemies to call him, in the next Parliament, “King Pym”.

The Second Bishops' War followed the dissolution of the Short Parliament. In the peace which ended it Charles, as we

have seen, promised to pay £850 a day to the Scottish Army. But with this large sum of money required, he was compelled to summon another

Parliament and, what is more, to listen to its demands.<sup>1</sup> The House of Commons was, at that time, an aristocratic and not what we should now consider a democratic assembly; and the Parliament which met in *November, 1640*—to be known in history as the *Long Parliament*—was composed, it has been said, of the very flower of the English gentry and educated laity.

The work of this Parliament for the first nine months of its existence was the abolition of the arbitrary power of the Crown.

<sup>1</sup> As it was, Charles had to seize £130,000 of bullion from the Mint, and merchants could not meet the Bills of Exchange. This caused immense dislocation, and was one of the things which turned the merchant class against Charles.



Now at last, after nigh forty years, some of the questions at issue between King and Parliament were to be definitely settled. The House of Commons during these nine months worked with practical unanimity—a fact which shows how universal the dissatisfaction with the king's government had been. Under Pym's leadership laws were passed declaring that this particular Parliament was not to be adjourned or dissolved without its own consent, and that, in future, Parliaments must be summoned every three years (the *Triennial Act*). Arbitrary courts—such as the Star Chamber and the Court of High Commission—were abolished; and taxes, such as ship-money, were declared illegal, and tunnage and poundage also without consent of Parliament. Only on a Bill for the abolition of Episcopacy—the Root and Branch Bill—was there great divergence of opinion.

Its Acts,  
Nov. 1640-  
Aug. 1641.

Along with these laws came the punishment of the king's former advisers. Some, however, had fled overseas, but others were imprisoned and impeached,<sup>1</sup> and amongst these were the two greatest, Laud and Strafford. Laud was not beheaded till 1645, but to the popular imagination "Black Tom Tyrant", as Strafford was called, was the embodiment of the arbitrary power of the king. In the words of a contemporary, "the whole kingdom was his accuser", and when he was impeached for treason it was felt that his trial would decide the question whether government was to be in future by the king's prerogative alone or by King and Parliament combined. But it was impossible to prove that Strafford had been guilty of treason: he might have been guilty of acts against the nation, but not of acts against the king. Of his government in Ireland, which was one point of attack, he made a very able defence. It was universally believed—possibly rightly—that Strafford had advised the king to utilize the Irish army to overawe English resistance. But the only evidence of this was found in a copy of the notes taken at a Privy Council meeting by one of its members, in which Strafford was reported to have said: "You have an army here you may employ to reduce this

The Trial  
of Strafford,  
1641.

<sup>1</sup>In the whole course of English history there have been only seventy impeachments, and of this number a quarter took place between 1640 and 1642.



kingdom", and from the context it was impossible to judge whether "this kingdom" referred to England or Scotland.

Eventually the House of Commons gave up the impeachment and passed instead a Bill of Attainder, condemning him as guilty of treason.<sup>1</sup> The bill was sent up to the House of Lords, which, after some hesitation, passed it. The only hope of life left to Strafford lay in the king. But after two days of agonizing doubt Charles, with his palace surrounded by an angry crowd, afraid that if he held out his beloved queen herself would be impeached,<sup>2</sup> and advised to surrender by his Council, by the judges and by some of the bishops, and even by Strafford himself, eventually gave his consent to the bill. Strafford, brave and noble to the end, was executed on Tower Hill (May, 1641).<sup>3</sup> To the 200,000 who were present, as well as to the great majority of Englishmen, his execution was necessary for the safety of the nation.

At the end of the summer of 1641 Englishmen had come to the parting of the ways, and the work of the Long Parliament was to be no longer unanimous. The final split between the two parties came in the debates on the *Grand Remonstrance* (November). Previously to this Charles had made a journey to Scotland (September) with the hope, no doubt, of organizing a party favourable to his cause—a hope in which he was disappointed. It was whilst he was playing a game of golf in that country in October that he heard news of the Irish Catholic rebellion<sup>4</sup> (p. 428). That rebellion had important results in England. Even its horrors were exaggerated in the accounts received in England. Consequently Protestant feeling was inflamed and affected the king, because he was suspected of some complicity with the rebels. Moreover, to suppress the rebellion an army would be necessary. This aroused a fresh question of the very greatest

<sup>1</sup> Consequently they had not got to prove his guilt; they merely asserted that he was guilty and ought to be executed.

<sup>2</sup> The House of Commons intended to impeach the queen for her intrigues with foreign powers if the king had refused to pass the bill.

<sup>3</sup> "I thank God," he said, when he took off his doublet at the scaffold, "I am not afraid of death, nor daunted with any discouragement rising from my fears, but do as cheerfully put off my doublet at this time as ever I did when I went to bed."

<sup>4</sup> According to tradition, Charles finished his game.



consequence—Who was to control the army, the king or the Parliament? Upon the answer hung the liberties of England.

It was now that Pym brought forward the document known as the *Grand Remonstrance*. This was, partly, a recapitulation of all the evil deeds of which Pym and the Puritan party held Charles to be guilty. But it also contained a scheme of reform for the future which was much too advanced for many at that period. It proposed, for instance, that only ministers should be appointed of whom the House of Commons should approve, and that a Synod of Divines should be summoned to make religious changes. Such proposals would, in the opinion of many, have shattered the power of king and bishop alike. The debates upon them were keen and protracted. Churchman was ranged against Puritan, and constitutional Royalists like Falkland and Hyde, who still wished the king to direct the Government, against those like Pym, who were grasping at sovereignty, and wished Parliament to exercise direct control over the ministers. The Remonstrance was finally carried, long after midnight, in the early morning of *November 23*, but only by eleven votes. In the excitement members clutched their swords. "I thought," said one, "we had all sat in the Valley of the Shadow of Death." The Civil War was not far off.

To attempt a *coup d'état* and to fail is fatal. Yet this was the fortune of Charles. On *January 4, 1642*, hearing that the House of Commons intended to impeach the queen, he decided to forestall such an action by accusing the five leading members of the House of high treason for intrigues with the Scots. Included in this number were Pym and Hampden. Charles determined to arrest the five members himself, and went down to the House of Commons accompanied by a guard of some 400 men.<sup>1</sup> But, through an indiscreet friend of the queen's, the five members had learnt the king's intention, and when Charles entered the House he found, to use his own words, that "the birds had flown". For the king to enter the House of Commons in this fashion was, of course,

The attempt on the five members, Jan., 1642.

<sup>1</sup> It is said that Charles hesitated on the morning of the 4th to carry out his design, but the queen urged him on. "Go, you coward," she cried, "and pull out these rogues by the ears, or never see my face more!"



a scandalous breach of its privileges, and when he left it there were loud and angry cries of "Privilege! Privilege!" There is no need to detail the history of the next seven months. Both sides tried to obtain control of the militia, and Parliament passed a bill with this object, which Charles vetoed. Both sides made preparations for war. In April Hotham, the Governor of Hull, went so far as to refuse the king admittance to that town. And on *August 22*, at Nottingham, the king's standard was set up.<sup>1</sup> The great Civil War had begun.

## XXVIII. The Civil War, 1642-45

In the great Civil War the bulk of the nobility and the gentry and their tenants were on the side of the King, whilst the majority of the townsmen and yeomen fought for Parliament. Yet it would be a mistake to regard the war as one of class against class. Eighty peers fought for the King, thirty fought against him, and 175 members of the House of Commons belonged to the Royalist party. Geographically, a line drawn from the Humber to Southampton roughly divides the two parties: east of that line is, on the whole, Parliamentary; west of that line, with the important exceptions of Bristol, Gloucester, and Plymouth, is on the whole, Royalist. The real line of division is, however, political—as to whether King or Parliament shall be supreme—and perhaps, above all, religious, the Anglican against the Puritan.

Summing up the advantages possessed by either side, it should be noted that the Parliamentary party had possession of the city of London, and that its cause was probably supported by two-thirds of the population and three-quarters of the wealth of the country. Fewer troops also were employed by Parliament in the garrisoning of small detached forts and fortified country houses. Moreover, the navy was on the side of Parliament, and could be employed not only to ward

<sup>1</sup> According to Clarendon, it was blown down the same night by a very strong and unruly wind—an inauspicious beginning.



off foreign aid, but also to carry troops and to protect the coast towns. The Parliamentary forces undoubtedly contained the better infantry, but at that time the bayonet had not been invented. Consequently half the infantry were pikemen, and useless beyond the reach of their fifteen-foot pike, and half were musketeers, and therefore useless for hand-to-hand fighting. Moreover, the musketeer's task in those days was a harassing and laborious one, and he took a long time to fire his musket.<sup>1</sup> Therefore the infantry were greatly handicapped, and we find in the Civil War that the battles were won by the cavalry.

But it was in the cavalry in the opening stages of the war that the Royalists had such a great advantage, for they possessed better riders and better horses. Moreover, the Royalists had the king and the unity of aim and command which his presence should have given; they had at first more experienced and better leaders; and during the first two years of the war strategical ability was confined to the King's party. Above all, in *Prince Rupert*,<sup>2</sup> not yet twenty-three, the nephew of Charles, the Royalists had not only a born cavalry leader—brave, inspiring, energetic—but a general capable of planning a decisive campaign. Prince Rupert also was a leader who had profited by the new Swedish tactics to make his men charge hard and reserve their pistol fire till the charge had gone home.<sup>3</sup> Rupert and the other Royalist leaders should have proved more than a match for a general with so little initiative as the Parliament's first commander, Lord Essex, possessed, or for "sweet meeke" Lord Manchester, as he was called, both of whom, moreover, were "half-measures" men, "not wanting to beat the King too much". Rupert, however, was to exhibit a certain sharpness of temper in counsel which made him a difficult man to work with, and, above

<sup>1</sup> A musketeer had to extract powder from a flask and pour it into the muzzle of his musket, to put a bullet which he had previously deposited in his mouth into the muzzle, to ram the bullet home, to fit the musket into a rest (it was too heavy and too long to be without one), and finally to ignite the powder with a match (a twisted strand of tow), which had probably in the preceding operations been scorching the back of his hands.

<sup>2</sup> His mother was the Princess Elizabeth, who married the Elector Palatine. She had the reputation of being a very devoted mother; but according to one of her daughters, she much preferred the society of dogs and monkeys to that of her own children when they were young.

<sup>3</sup> The old tactics for cavalry were to advance slowly, to "caracole", as the expression went, up to the infantry, to discharge pistols, and then to retire.



all, an impetuosity in battle which was to ruin the King's cause.

The aim of the King in the *first* year of the war (1642) was to *march upon London with one army*. Starting from Shrewsbury, he outmarched Essex, who was also coming from the Midlands, but then turned to meet him at *Edgehill* (October).<sup>1</sup> Both wings of the Royalist cavalry were successful, but Rupert pursued too far, and in the excitement the reserve cavalry of Charles—called the “show-troop”, for it consisted largely of well-dressed landed proprietors—joined the pursuit. Consequently the Royalist infantry was hard pressed, and Rupert after a lengthy absence only returned in time to make the battle a drawn one. The King was, however, able to continue his march, but when he got as close to London as Turnham Green he found his progress barred by 24,000 Londoners, and accordingly retired to Oxford. Military critics disagree as to whether Charles should have tried to force his way to London; but his army was never to get so near the capital again.

In the *second* year of the war (1643) the King designed a *triple advance upon London*. Lord Newcastle,<sup>2</sup> after subduing the north, was to march south; Hopton, after subduing the south-west, was to advance east; Charles was to keep Essex employed, and advance upon London when the others were ready. In the spring and summer the outlook was black for Parliament. Newcastle won *Atherton Moor* (June 1), and in consequence secured a large part of Yorkshire. In the west Bristol was taken by Rupert, and Hopton utterly defeated Waller, the rising general on the side of Parliament, at *Roundaway Down* in July. It was this battle which led Pym to begin serious negotiations with the Scots for the loan of an army, and which caused the few members

The campaign of 1643; the triple advance upon London.

<sup>1</sup> It was usual, in the Civil War, for the armies to wear “field signs” to distinguish them. Thus, at Edgehill, the Parliamentarians had orange scarves; at Newbury they wore green boughs; and at Marston Moor, white handkerchiefs or white pieces of paper in their hats. Later, in the New Model Army, the uniform was red—hence red became the colour of the British army.

<sup>2</sup> Newcastle once spent £20,000 in entertaining James I at Welbeck, Ben Jonson writing the masques on that occasion. Subsequently he became tutor to the Prince of Wales (afterwards Charles II).







of the House of Lords left in London to propose to the House of Commons that most abject terms of peace should be made with the King—terms only rejected in the House of Commons by seven votes. In the centre, meanwhile, the King had lost Reading, but the Parliamentarians had been beaten in a skirmish at *Chalgrove*, near Oxford, a skirmish in which Hampden was killed.

In *September, 1643*, however, the tide turned. "Hull and Plymouth", it has been said, "saved the Parliamentary cause." Newcastle's Northerners with Hull untaken refused to advance south, as they feared to leave their homes and property at the mercy of their foes in that town. Hopton, though he continued to advance east, found his army dwindling away because his Westerners had similar fears with regard to Plymouth. Meanwhile Charles, unable to advance on London unsupported, had advanced to besiege Gloucester early in August, and in September Essex successfully relieved it. Charles, however, intercepted the army of Essex on its return journey at *Newbury*, but he failed, after an indecisive battle, to prevent the return of Essex to London. In the battle Lord Falkland, one of the noblest figures in the war, was killed. In October, Hull, which Newcastle had besieged, was relieved as the result of a battle at *Winceby*, in which Cromwell, the future leader of the Puritans, was conspicuous. Only in the south did Hopton continue his victorious advance.

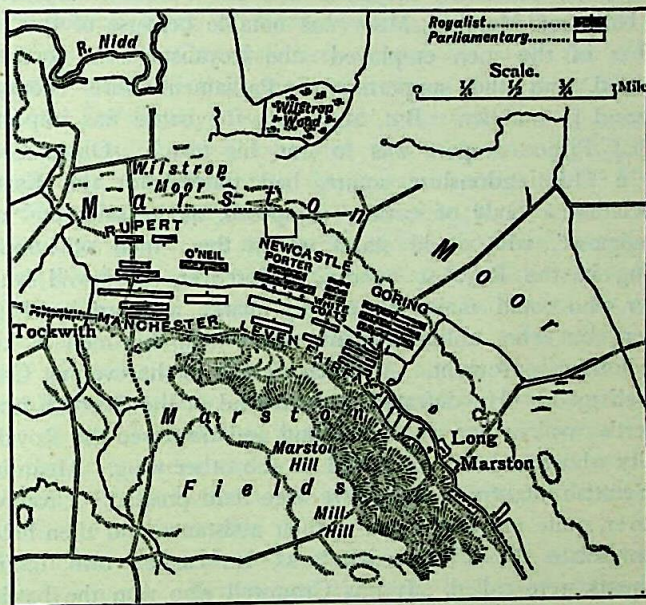
In the last month of the year the Parliament suffered a great loss in the death of Pym. Before his death, however, he had succeeded in negotiating an alliance with the Scots. Both sides had appealed to the Scots, but the Presbyterians, feeling that if the King triumphed over Parliament he would inevitably try to subdue them, determined to throw in their lot with Parliament. The Scottish terms were uncompromising—Presbyterianism must be the future religion of England. Parliament, in the *Solemn League and Covenant*, accepted the condition with qualifications,<sup>1</sup> and in return obtained from Scotland an army of 20,000 men—a force which enabled it to win the war.

<sup>1</sup> The Church of England was to be reformed "according to the Word of God and the example of the best reformed Churches". The second half of the sentence refers to the Scottish Church in particular, but the first half might be and was variously interpreted by Scots and English.



With 1644 the war took a somewhat different shape. Each side had secured an ally; the Scots had joined Parliament, and to balance them Charles brought a force over from Ireland. But the tide ran strongly for Parliament. The Scottish army was of immense assistance, whilst the Irish soldiers, who were worthless troops and hated as Catholics, merely

The campaign  
of 1644.



Marston Moor, July 2nd, 1644

Cromwell was on the left commanding the cavalry in Manchester's Division, and the Scottish cavalry was to the left of him.

alienated a large number of the king's supporters.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the army of the Eastern Association—an association of Eastern Counties formed originally for defensive purposes only—left its own district, and under Lord Manchester prepared to take an active part in the war; and in March the defeat of Hopton meant

<sup>1</sup> The Irish rebels were regarded with horror by the English, and the use of them by Charles had the same effect in England then, it has been well pointed out, as the employment of Sepoys would have had if a similar crisis had arisen in England just after the Indian Mutiny of 1857.



the loss of all hope of a successful invasion of Sussex and Kent by the Royalists.

In July, 1644, came the great Royalist defeat at *Marston Moor*. Newcastle, who had been besieged in York by the Scots and by Fairfax and Manchester, was relieved by Rupert, *Marston Moor, July, 1644.* and shortly afterwards a great battle was fought between the combined Royalists and the Parliamentary forces. The battle of Marston Moor was notable because of the large number of the men employed: the Royalists were seventeen thousand, and the supporters of Parliament were twenty-six thousand in number. But, above all, the battle was important in that Prince Rupert was to find his match. Oliver Cromwell, a Huntingdonshire squire, had trained for the Eastern Association a body of cavalry composed, as he said, of "men of religion", who could stand up to the "men of honour" serving in the Royalist cavalry. Moreover, Cromwell was a leader who could make his cavalry charge as hard as Prince Rupert, but who, unlike Rupert, could keep his men in hand for a further movement. At seven o'clock in the evening Cromwell charged.<sup>1</sup> He defeated, with the aid of the Scottish horse, Rupert's cavalry, then wheeled round and dispersed the Royalists cavalry who had been successful on the other wing. Meantime, the Scottish infantry in the centre were hard pressed. Cromwell, however, quite untiring, came to their assistance and then helped to annihilate the "Whitecoats", as Newcastle's own infantry regiments were called. It was Cromwell who won the battle—indeed, the three chief generals on his side were at one period fugitives from the field—and the result of the battle was not only that Newcastle retired abroad, but that the six northern counties were lost to the king.<sup>2</sup>

At the end of August Charles managed to surround *Essex's* army at *Lostwithiel*, in Cornwall, and though Essex himself escaped by sea, and his horse broke through the Royalist lines,

<sup>1</sup> The Royalist leaders thought there would be no fight that day. Newcastle had gone to his great coach, called for a pipe of tobacco, and settled down for the evening.

<sup>2</sup> Here is Cromwell's own description of the battle: "We never charged but we routed the enemy. The left wing, which I commanded, being our own force, saving a few Scots in our rear, beat all the prince's horse, and God made them stubble to our swords. We charged their regiments of foot and routed all we charged."



his infantry had to capitulate. Charles, however, on his return in October, found his way barred at *Newbury* by another army under Manchester and Essex. The battle which followed, like the first battle fought there, was indecisive, though, but for Manchester's want of enterprise, Charles would not have got through, as he succeeded in doing, to Oxford.

Second Battle  
of Newbury,  
1644.

The second battle of Newbury brought to a head the dissatisfaction which Cromwell and others felt with the "half-measures" men and their lack of energy. This dissatisfaction led to the *Self-denying Ordinance* being carried in Parliament, under which members of Parliament resigned their commissions in the army. Accordingly Manchester and Essex retired, though Cromwell, who resigned because he was a member of the House of Commons, was reappointed to a command. Parliament also resolved to reorganize the army. As a consequence, the Parliament obtained just what it wanted. The *New Model* army, as it was called, was a force well-officered,<sup>1</sup> with regular pay, and especially strong in its cavalry and artillery. It was not bound by local ties, and it could "go anywhere and do anything". Above all, Fairfax<sup>2</sup> was made the commander and was given absolute control, without interference by Parliamentary commissions, whilst Cromwell was put in charge of the cavalry.

The Self-denying  
Ordinance  
and the New  
Model Army.

The result of the New Model was seen in 1645 at the battle of *Naseby* (June). Rupert beat the wing opposed to him, it is true, but pursued too far. Cromwell was successful on the other flank, then re-formed his cavalry, and, as at Marston Moor, charged the Royalist infantry who were pressing the Parliamentarians. Cromwell made one more charge at Rupert's returning cavalry, and the day was won. The battle was decisive. It cost Charles half his cavalry, all his infantry and artillery, and most of his best officers. Moreover,

The Battle  
of Naseby,  
June, 1645.

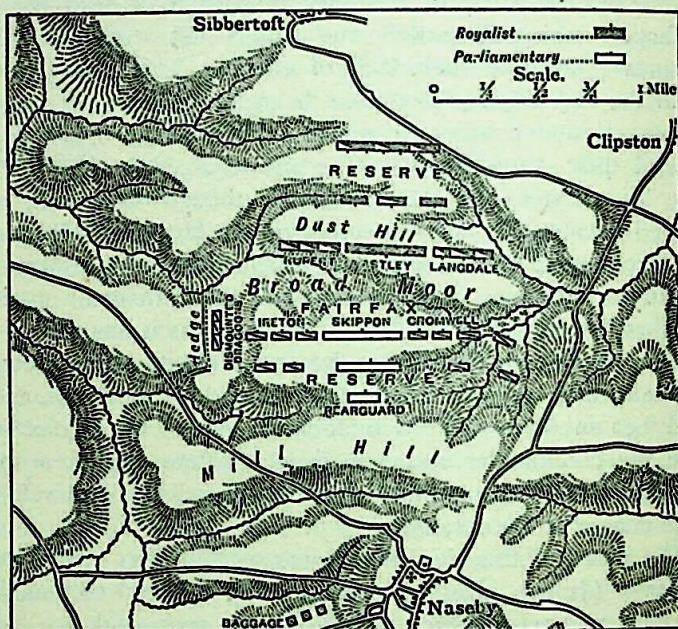
<sup>1</sup> It is a mistake to suppose that the officers were not gentlemen—thirty out of thirty-seven colonels were of gentle birth.

<sup>2</sup> Fairfax was a very brave man, a vigorous commander, and an excellent disciplinarian, besides being conspicuous for generosity to his opponents. He was also a lover of learning, and when he captured Oxford in 1646 his first care was to send a strong guard to preserve the famous Bodleian Library.



it revealed to the nation his intrigues with foreign powers, for the cabinet containing much of his correspondence was captured. "The king and the kingdom", says Clarendon, the Royalist historian, "were lost at Naseby"; and after Naseby the war soon ended. To the south-west Fairfax was successful at *Langport*, and in September Bristol was retaken by Fairfax. .

But, meantime, in Scotland a brilliant attempt had been made



Naseby, June 14th, 1645

to retrieve the king's fortunes. Some two months after the battle of Marston Moor in 1644, a Scottish nobleman, the Marquis of Montrose, the "Great Marquis", opened a campaign on behalf of Charles. He had signed the National Covenant in 1638, and had fought for the Covenanters, but he had always affirmed his devoted loyalty to the Crown. The alliance of the Covenanters with the English Parliament was to his mind an act of disloyalty to the sovereign, and he took the only course open to him as a royalist and a man of

Montrose's successes in Scotland, Sept., 1644-Aug., 1645.



honour—he offered his sword to the king. With forces which never exceeded four thousand foot and two hundred horse he won, within the space of twelve months, no less than six battles. His only permanent force was a contingent from Ireland of some sixteen hundred, consisting mainly of Scotsmen who had served in the Irish war; but he also got various clans to assist him.

The first victory was won on September 1, 1644, at *Tippermuir*, near Perth—won by a rush upon a newly levied army.<sup>1</sup> Then after a victory at *Aberdeen*—marred by the excesses of his troops in the town after the battle—Montrose turned upon Argyll. Joined by the Macdonalds, the mortal foes of the Campbells, he penetrated into the Campbell country and won a decisive battle at *Inverlochy*<sup>2</sup> over double his numbers. Finally, after two other successes, he won the battle of *Kilsyth*, near Glasgow (August 15, 1645), though here, it has been said, the mistakes of his enemy were so enormous that it would have been difficult not to beat him.

After the battle of Kilsyth, Glasgow submitted, and it seemed as if all Scotland might be recovered for the king; Montrose even hoped to cross the border with twenty thousand men. But his victories were at an end. The Macdonalds deserted him to go and renew their fighting with the Campbells. The Gordons went away for some reasons of personal pique. In the Lowlands, where Montrose now was, he obtained no support; the General Assembly had excommunicated him, and his Irish soldiers were regarded as “instruments of Satan”. Moreover, two months before the last victory at Kilsyth, had come the fatal day at Naseby. Part of the Scottish forces in England were, therefore, free to operate against Montrose, and marched north. Consequently Montrose’s depleted forces were overwhelmed at *Philiphburgh* (near Selkirk, September, 1645), and, after the battle, he himself, at the king’s command, went to the Continent. The Civil War both in England and Scotland was now practically over, and finally completed when Charles in May,

Failure of  
Montrose,  
Sept., 1645.

<sup>1</sup> In their flight after the battle ten of the good citizens of Perth, it is said, “burstled with running”.

<sup>2</sup> Argyll himself was on a barge in the loch during the fight, perhaps because he had dislocated his shoulder three weeks previously; but his enemies had another explanation of his conduct.



1646,<sup>1</sup> surrendered himself to the Scottish army, and when the city of Oxford capitulated in the following June.

## XXIX. From the Civil War to the Restoration, 1645-60

The great Civil War was over, but the termination of the war still left great questions undecided. How was England in future to be governed? What form of Christian religion was to be the State religion, and how far was toleration to be extended to those who could not agree with it? These questions, difficult enough in themselves, were complicated by the number of parties who wished to share in their settlement. There was, *first* of all, *Charles I*; the king had been vanquished, but no one at first wished to abolish the monarchy. He played the part that might have been expected of him. Too high-minded and too high-spirited to give up either the Church of England and her bishops, or the control of the ministers and the army, he was not high-minded enough to avoid pretending that he would do so. Designing, as he said himself, to "set his opponents by the ears", he intrigued not only with each party in turn or even simultaneously, but also with the Catholics in Ireland and the great minister, Mazarin, in France.

There was, *secondly*, the *Scottish army*, determined, as a matter of conscience, to see that Presbyterianism was permanently established in England as the Parliament had promised in the "Solemn League and Covenant". Then there was, *thirdly*, the *Long Parliament*—shorn, of course, of the hundred and seventy-five Royalists who had joined the king in the Civil War. The majority in this Parliament wished Charles to reign indeed, but not in any real sense to govern; on

Parties after  
the war;  
the king.

The Scottish  
army and the  
Parliament.

<sup>1</sup> He left Oxford with his long locks cut and his beard altered; he journeyed to Harrow, surveyed London from that spot, and then by a circuitous route reached the Scottish army in Nottinghamshire.



the other hand, it was afraid of the New Model Army. In matters of religion it was anxious to impose Presbyterianism upon the whole people of England, and had already—with the aid of Scottish Commissioners and a body of people called the Westminster Assembly of Divines—taken steps to make it the established religion in England.

*Fourthly*, there gradually emerge—as in all big movements—various groups of *Extremists*: Democrats, who wanted annual parliaments and universal suffrage; Levellers, who wanted all men to be equal; and idealists, who thought the Fifth Monarchy<sup>1</sup> was about to be achieved under their own beneficent rule. *Lastly*, and above all, there was the *New Model Army*. In this army the Independents predominated; they were indifferent as to what form of established religion was set up, but were determined to secure toleration for “tender consciences”, and to be free from the absolute control either of an Anglican bishop or of a Presbyterian elder. An army of forty to fifty thousand men, well trained, well officered, and well disciplined, was bound to be irresistible in politics if it chose to interfere.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, in Oliver Cromwell it possessed unquestionably the greatest man of this epoch.

The Extremists  
and the New  
Model Army.

Born at Huntingdon in 1599, of a good family, *Cromwell* became a member of Parliament at the age of twenty-nine. In 1642, at the age of forty-three, his military career began, and it was not to close till he was fifty-two. He had made his reputation in the cavalry during the Civil War, and to him was due the chief credit for organizing and training horsemen that could rival Prince Rupert's. In his cavalry tactics he, like Rupert, did not make the mistake of firing before charging, but, unlike Rupert, he did not rely, it has been said, so much upon the pace as upon the weight and solidarity of his charge.<sup>3</sup> In his campaigns, both during the Civil

Oliver Cromwell.

<sup>1</sup> The last of the great monarchies referred to in the prophecy of Daniel (*Dan. ii. 44*).

<sup>2</sup> Enemies as well as friends bear witness to its discipline. Punishments, when inflicted, were apt to be severe: for blasphemy or cursing, soldiers were sometimes bored through the tongue with a red-hot iron.

<sup>3</sup> His cavalry did not gallop, but charged in close order, to use Cromwell's own words, at “a pretty round trot”.



War and later, he showed that, though not perhaps a great strategist, he possessed real genius in seeing the critical points of a battle, and untiring energy in following up a victory.

In politics, so far, he had not made much mark. As a member of the Long Parliament, however, he had shown himself greatly interested in religious questions, and a keen partisan; "if the Grand Remonstrance had not passed," he said, "I would have sold all I had the next morning, and never seen England more." In the years after the Civil War was over, his most striking characteristic, especially in his negotiations with king or Parliament, is the long hesitation and indecision he shows in making up his mind; and then, when a decision has at last been arrived at, the "swift, daring hammer-stroke", as it has been called, that follows.

The time has long gone by when Cromwell was regarded as a hypocrite, half knave, half fanatic. A man of intense religious feeling, who looked upon all he did as due to God's providence, he possessed at the same time strong practical common sense. "Trust in God and keep your powder dry" is said to have been the advice he gave to his soldiers—and the saying illustrates this double aspect of his character. His speeches are somewhat intricate and sometimes unintelligible, but they reveal a man of masterful energy who never lost sight of his ideals. Though a hater of the Roman Catholic religion and not very lenient to supporters of the Anglican bishops, he was large-hearted; and his ideas of toleration, inadequate as they seem to us to-day, were far more liberal than those generally prevalent during his own lifetime. If, when he came to supreme power, he showed himself anxious to put down undesirable amusements and to make life in England more serious, it must not be supposed that he was averse to all pleasure. On the contrary, he was fond of music and of writing verses; he loved good horses, and was a bold jumper and a skilful driver.<sup>1</sup> Cromwell, above all, was an Englishman. He was, in the words of the great historian of this epoch, "with all his physical and moral audacity, with all his tenderness and spiritual yearnings, in the world of action what

<sup>1</sup> A team of six horses did run away with him, however, in Hyde Park, while he was Protector, to the great joy of his enemies, who wrote numberless lampoons on the subject.



Shakespeare was in the world of thought, the greatest because the most typical Englishman of all time".

The history of the fourteen years that follow the Civil War can be briefly put. The New Model Army began to interfere in politics, and finally became supreme, with Cromwell as its leader. It then tried to base its authority upon the consent of the English people as expressed in Parliament—and in this it failed. But we must follow the stages in a little more detail.

The years 1646-50.

## 1. From the fall of Oxford till the execution of the King, 1646-49

In these fourteen years we may take, as a *First Period*, the two and a half years that elapse from the fall of the city of Oxford until the execution of the king (June, 1646—January, 1649). They are years of negotiations and intrigue, of which the merest outline must suffice. First of all, the king was with the Scottish army, which retired to Newcastle. He refused to accept the Solemn League and Covenant, as the Scots pressed him to do, and he refused to accept the terms which Parliament proposed—terms, indeed, that would have taken all power away from him. As he refused their terms, the Scottish army could not take him back to their own country; and they finally—having been promised by Parliament £400,000 for their expenses—handed the king over to Parliament, and then recrossed the Tweed<sup>1</sup> (February, 1647).

Period I:  
June, 1646—  
Jan., 1649.  
(a) Charles  
and the Scots.

The next step was that Parliament proceeded to quarrel with the army. The differences were partly religious. Parliament was a supporter of Presbyterianism. The army consisted largely of Independents, who objected just as much to the rule of the presbyter as to the rule of the priest, and who wanted liberty for "tender consciences". The Parliament—reasonably enough, now that the war was over—wished

(b) Parliament  
and the army.

<sup>1</sup> "The Scotch army", it was said, "sold their king as Judas sold his Master", and accepted the money as "blood money", to "their own eternal infamy"; but it is difficult to see what other policy they could have pursued.



to reduce the army by one-third, and proposed to transfer the bulk of what was left to Ireland, to finish the war in that country. But it revealed its jealousy of the army by proposing to break up its old organization. Moreover, it was foolish enough to think that the army would be satisfied with six weeks' pay, when in the case of the infantry eighteen weeks' and in the case of the cavalry forty-three weeks' pay was owing. The army naturally objected, and elected men called "agitators" (i.e. agents) to make known their grievances. Finally Cornet Joyce and a body of soldiers seized the king at Holmby House,<sup>1</sup> in Northamptonshire, where he was residing, and carried him off to the army headquarters at Newmarket (*June, 1647*);<sup>2</sup> whilst the army itself approached London, and insisted upon the retirement from the House of Commons of the eleven members most hostile to it. This was the first—but by no means the last—direct interference of the army with the Parliament. Cromwell had tried to mediate between them, but finally joined the army.

Then the next stage followed, negotiations between the army and the king. Drawn up by Ireton, Cromwell's son-in-law, (c) The army and the king. the "Heads of the Proposals", as the army terms were called, recognized Episcopacy as the State religion, but allowed toleration for others. They set up a Council of State to manage foreign affairs and the army, and left for ten years the appointment of ministers with Parliament.<sup>3</sup> The king was perhaps unwise to refuse these terms.

But Charles preferred to turn to the Scots, and this opens another stage in the tangled history of these negotiations. There had been in Scotland, especially amongst the nobles, a reaction in favour of the king, and the Scots were angry at the success of the Independents, and still hoped that Presbyterianism might be enforced upon England. At the suggestion of the Scottish Commissioners, the king, in

<sup>1</sup> At Holmby Charles was allowed to ride about the country with an escort, and to play bowls in the gardens of the neighbouring country houses.

<sup>2</sup> "Where is your commission?" said Charles to Joyce on his arrival. "Here," answered Joyce, pointing to his soldiers. "It is as fair a commission," was Charles's answer, "and as well-written a commission as any I have seen written in my life."

<sup>3</sup> They also arranged for a redistribution of seats and a revised system of election closely resembling that finally adopted in the Reform Bill of 1832.



*November, 1647*, effected his escape, and fled to *Carisbrooke Castle*, in the Isle of Wight, the governor of which place, however, remained, contrary to the king's expectation, faithful to the army. Consequently he was kept a prisoner, but he managed, nevertheless, to complete his negotiations with the Scots. Two days after *Christmas Day, 1647*, Charles signed a treaty called "*The Engagement*",<sup>1</sup> by which, in return for his restoration to the throne of England, Charles promised to establish Presbyterianism in England for three years, and to suppress other sects.

As a result of "*the Engagement*" the Duke of Hamilton and a Scottish army invaded England in 1648; the Royalist risings also took place in Wales and in the south-east of England. But the Second Civil War, as it is called, was a half-hearted affair. Scotland was divided, the majority of the Presbyterian ministers, so potent in influence, being against the expedition to England. The Scottish army lacked enthusiasm, and was moreover ill equipped—only one man in five knew how to handle musket or pike, and there was not a single piece of artillery. Consequently, whilst Fairfax subdued the south-east, and took Colchester, Cromwell, in a campaign of great energy, interposed his army between Hamilton and Scotland. He destroyed at *Preston* an English Royalist force attached to the Scottish army, and then, in a relentless pursuit of thirty miles, caused the Scottish army to capitulate, ten thousand prisoners falling into his hands (*August, 1648*). Finally, Cromwell entered Scotland, and restored the influence of Argyll, the head of the Presbyterian party.

Meantime, during the war, the king was again negotiating with Parliament, and was making concessions which he had no intention of keeping. But the end was near. Cromwell and his army had gone to the war with the intention of bringing that "*man of blood*", as they called the king, to account on their return. When they did return, to find Parliament carrying on negotiations with the king, they resorted to force. On *December 6, 1648*, Colonel *Pride* and a body of red-coated musketeers, standing at the door of

The Second Civil War, 1648.

The execution of the king. Jan., 1649.

<sup>1</sup>The treaty was signed, wrapped in lead, and buried in the castle garden until it could be safely taken away.



the House of Commons, excluded a hundred and forty-three of its members from entering. "Pride's Purge" completed, the remaining members—now only about ninety in number—decided to set up a tribunal to try the king.<sup>1</sup>

The result of the trial was a foregone conclusion; and at four minutes past two in the afternoon of *January 30, 1649*, on a scaffold erected outside the Banqueting Hall of Whitehall, the king was beheaded.<sup>2</sup> Never had Charles shown himself to possess such nobility and kingliness of character as in his last days. There is a story that Cromwell, in the middle of the following night, visited the king's body, looked at it mournfully, and murmured the words, "Cruel necessity!"<sup>3</sup> The cruelty of the execution no one will deny; its necessity has been matter of controversy from that day to this. The deed, at all events, shocked public opinion at the time,<sup>4</sup> and the publication a few days after the execution of the *Eikon Basilike*, which purported to contain the king's last thoughts and meditations, led an ever-increasing number to regard him as a martyr.

## 2. The rule of the "Rump Parliament", 1649-53

So began the Commonwealth. We may take as a *Second Period* the four years between *January, 1649*, and *April, 1653*.

The Government during these years was in the hands of the House of Commons which had been returned to the Long Parliament in 1640; but by successive purgings it had been, out of an original total of four hundred and ninety members, "winnowed, sifted, and

<sup>1</sup> The trial took place in Westminster Hall, and the place where Charles stood is marked by a brass tablet. As the galleries were crowded with spectators, including ladies, the President of the Court took the precaution to wear a shot-proof hat, which can still be seen at Oxford.

<sup>2</sup> The king, it is said, wore two shirts in consequence of the cold, so that he might not shiver and appear to be afraid, and he walked so fast from St. James's to the Banqueting Hall at Whitehall, outside which he was executed, that his guards could scarcely keep up with him.

<sup>3</sup> The story is told by Lord Southampton, who had leave to watch by the body that night. The figure of the visitor was muffled; but from his voice and gait Lord Southampton took him to be Cromwell.

<sup>4</sup> When the executioner showed the king's head to the thousands gathered at Whitehall, "such a groan arose", writes an eyewitness, "as I never heard before and desire I may never hear again".



brought to a handful"<sup>1</sup> of some ninety members. This *Rump* Parliament, as it was called, governed England with an authority which no assembly in England, before or since, has possessed.<sup>2</sup> With no monarchy and no House of Lords to control it—they were both abolished after the king's execution—it could pass what laws it pleased, pursue whatever policy suited it, and it could not be legally dissolved except of its own free will. It entrusted the administration of the country to a council of State of forty-one, the great majority of which were members of the "Rump", and to various committees, on each of which sat persons with special knowledge of the particular branch of administration committed to it.

The authority of the "Rump" Parliament really rested, of course, on the authority of Fairfax, Cromwell, and the New Model Army; and it was chiefly for that reason that it suppressed its enemies with such success. The Extremists first of all seemed formidable after the king's execution. But Cromwell was no Leveller or Fifth-Monarchy man, and he saw the danger of such opinions. "We must break them," he said, "or they will break us", and he suppressed with great energy a mutiny in the New Model Army. Ireland was the next scene of Cromwell's activity. Nearly all parties in that country had combined, after the execution of Charles I, to support his son; how Cromwell conquered Ireland, however, is described elsewhere (p. 429).

Cromwell,  
the Levellers,  
and Ireland.

Scotland was to be the next country visited by Cromwell. There were two parties in Scotland. On the one hand, Montrose wanted a rising of pure Royalists to be organized in the Highlands. On the other hand, Argyll wanted Charles II to adopt the Covenant, and to impose Presbyterianism upon all his three kingdoms. Montrose, publicly disowned but secretly encouraged by Charles, did attempt to raise the Highlands. But he was defeated, captured, and hanged in his "red scarlet coat" in the Grassmarket at Edinburgh (May,

Scotland and  
Charles II.

<sup>1</sup> The words are Cromwell's.

<sup>2</sup> Of course the "Rump" had no claim whatsoever to be considered representative of the nation. Neither the towns nor country districts of four counties, of which Lancashire was one, had any representatives at all; Wales had only three, and London one.



1650).<sup>1</sup> Meantime, in the same month that Montrose was executed, Charles agreed to the terms of Argyll; Presbyterianism was to be imposed in the king's dominions, and in all Scottish affairs Charles was to refer to the General Assembly and the Scottish Parliament. Shortly afterwards Charles landed in Scotland.

There ensued a war between England and Scotland. Cromwell, on his return from Ireland, invaded Scotland,<sup>2</sup> but he was outmanœuvred by Leslie, the Scottish commander, and was cornered in the peninsula of *Dunbar*, with no base but his ships. With his army, in his own words, "poor, shattered, hungry, discouraged", and with Leslie secure on the hills and ready to attack if he tried to escape, the outlook for Cromwell was black. But then Leslie, instead of waiting, "shogged"<sup>3</sup> his right wing still further to the right on to the low ground, so that he might hold the road by which Cromwell could escape. In so doing, Leslie's left wing became isolated, whilst his centre, being still up in the hills, was unable to manœuvre easily. Cromwell saw this, and next morning attacked and rolled up the right wing, whilst the rest of the Scottish army, entangled between a hill and a ravine, was helpless. Cromwell lost only twenty men, but the Scots lost three thousand in the battle besides ten thousand prisoners<sup>4</sup> (*September 3, 1650*).

Cromwell then marched on to Edinburgh, and in 1651 took Perth. His departure, however, towards the north of Scotland, had left the way open to England, and Charles, entering England by Carlisle, reached *Worcester*. Here, however, Cromwell, who had returned south, caught him up, and blocked his way to London. On the anniversary of Dunbar, Cromwell attacked Charles from both sides of the river, and after "as stiff a contest", in Cromwell's

Battle of  
Dunbar,  
Sept. 3, 1650.

Battle of  
Worcester,  
Sept. 3, 1651.

<sup>1</sup> "The leader of warlike men," it has been said, "swift and secret in his onslaught, the poet, the cavalier, the soul of air and fire, the foremost to head a forlorn hope, at last the forsaken victim of a forsaken cause, Montrose is for ever dear to the imagination."

<sup>2</sup> Fairfax refused to command an army against the Scots.

<sup>3</sup> i.e. moved on; the word is Cromwell's.

<sup>4</sup> When the Scots were defeated "the Lord General", said one of Cromwell's captains, "made a halt and sang the hundred and seventeenth Psalm" till his horse could gather for the chase—another instance of his practical piety.



words, "for four or five hours, as ever I have seen", absolutely defeated him (September 3, 1651). Though Charles himself escaped and got eventually to the Continent,<sup>1</sup> yet not one troop of his cavalry or one company of his infantry succeeded in following his example. Worcester decided the Royalist cause up till the Restoration of 1660; though there were numberless Royalist plots, they were never really serious. The battle also destroyed the independence of Scotland. An English army invaded that country, took its strong places, and Monck, who was a general in the army, governed it for the rest of the Commonwealth.<sup>2</sup>

Cromwell and his victorious army were now free to take part in politics. The "Rump" Parliament made reforms too slowly to please them, and they wished it to dissolve, though for some months they allowed it to continue. But when Cromwell found that its members were arranging for a new Parliament, to which they should not only all belong, but should have the power of excluding other members, his patience was exhausted. He came down to the House, "clad in plain black clothes and grey worsted stockings", and lectured its members. Then, with the aid of his soldiers, he fetched the Speaker down from the chair, took away "the bauble", as he called the mace, evicted the members, and locked the doors. According to Cromwell, "there was not so much as the barking of a dog" at this forcible ejection; indeed, all were tired of the "Rump's" rule.

Cromwell and  
the "Rump"  
Parliament.

### 3. The rule of Cromwell, 1653-58

We now come to our *Third Period*, the five and a half years that elapse between the dissolution of the "Rump", in *April, 1653*, and the death of Cromwell, in *September, 1658*. The monarchy, the Extremists, the Irish, the Scottish army, and the

<sup>1</sup> Charles had six weeks' wandering in England, full of adventures, before he finally got across the Channel from Brighton. He had to hide in an oak at one place, and in a "priest's hole", up a chimney, in another. He witnessed in a village the rejoicings at the news which had been received of his own death. In another village the blacksmith said he had not heard that "that rogue Charles Stuart, had been taken". "If that rogue were taken," answered Charles, "he deserves to be hanged more than the rest for bringing in the Scots."

<sup>2</sup> For the later history of Scotland, see p. 418.



remnants of the Long Parliament had been in turn suppressed. Cromwell and the army were at last supreme. The problem before Cromwell was, however, a difficult one—so difficult indeed that he never solved it. On the one hand, he desired a State based on free elections with an efficient system of Law, not indeed democratic in the modern sense, but managed by the Middle Class. On the other hand, he desired a Godly State, which was to force men to be moral—in his sense of the word. How was he to combine those desires, if the English people did not agree with his ideas of what a Godly State should be? He and his army wished, as it has been humorously put, to fix a legal wig upon the point of the soldier's sword. Unfortunately for them, however, their rule was not based upon great popular support. Consequently the wig fell off, and the naked sword only was visible. Parliaments were frequently called, but they were bound, unless nominated by the army leaders or purged of hostile elements, to be unmanageable.

The first experiment of the army was an assembly of persons selected by the Council of Army Officers. This Parliament, known as "the Little" or *Barebones' Parliament*—after the name of one of its members, known as "Praise-God Barebones"<sup>1</sup>—contained many notable Puritans, and it possessed, as the Speaker, the Provost of Eton. Moreover, it was the first Parliament of a "United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland". But unfortunately it was too visionary and impractical. It wished to reduce the law into the "bigness of a pocket book", and therefore angered the lawyers; it proposed to find money for the army in a way which the army thought made the chances of being paid exceedingly remote. Finally, its projects with regard to the religious system raised such a hornet's nest that Cromwell was only too thankful when the moderate element in the Assembly, by getting up early one morning, before their opponents were ready, carried a motion that the Assembly should surrender its power to Cromwell, and dissolve (December, 1653).

The next experiment was a new Constitution, drawn up by

<sup>1</sup> He was a leather-seller of Fleet Street; after the Restoration his windows were on more than one occasion the subject of attention from the youth of that neighbourhood.



Ireton, who was Cromwell's son-in-law, and a distinguished officer. It was known as the *Instrument of Government*. Cromwell was to be called Protector, and to have the executive power and a fixed sum for the purposes of government. Parliament, consisting of one House, was to possess the legislative power. But Parliament was controlled by the Protector, because he alone could summon it, he could veto any of its acts which were contrary to the principles of the new Constitution, and could dissolve it after it had sat five months. Cromwell himself was to be controlled, to a certain extent, by a Council of State which was created under the Instrument, and by the fact that, if he wanted additional money over and above the fixed sum allowed him, Parliament alone could grant it.<sup>1</sup>

There now begins what is called the *Protectorate* in English history. The *First Protectorate Parliament* met in 1654, and began by discussing the new Constitution. One hundred of its members had therefore to be excluded. The members that were left, however, evinced a desire to reduce the army and cut down its expenses. Moreover, they proposed to abolish toleration by drawing up a list of "damnable heresies", to which no one was to adhere, and of twenty "articles of faith", which no one was to dispute. Cromwell had to wait for five months under the Constitution, but he interpreted the month to be "lunar" and not "calendar" and dissolved this intolerant Parliament as soon as he could.

After the dissolution Cromwell tried for a time a new experiment in local government. England was divided into eleven districts, each under an official called a "Major-general", whose business it was to supervise the militia, to prevent Royalist plots, and to stimulate the local authorities in enforcing the various laws relating to conduct and morality which had recently been passed. Nothing made the Puritan rule so unpopular as this "poor little invention", as Cromwell called it, for people resented it as the act of a military despotism.

<sup>1</sup> In some respects Cromwell's powers were very similar to those possessed by the President of the United States to-day.



Then, in the summer of 1656, Cromwell called another Parliament—the *Second Protectorate Parliament*. One hundred of its members were excluded from taking their seats as a precautionary measure. The remainder showed their belief in Cromwell by presenting to him a new Constitution known as the *Humble Petition and Advice*, under which the Council of State was to be abolished, Cromwell was to be made king and given larger powers, and a second House was to be created. Cromwell hesitated long over his new title. It was, he said, to him personally “but a feather in his cap”, but there were great practical advantages in it, if only because, as one member said, the kingship was bounded “like an acre of land”, and people would understand its powers. The army was, however, opposed to the title, and Cromwell therefore refused it, whilst accepting the other changes.

The Second Protectorate Parliament then met again in its reformed condition; but many of Cromwell's supporters in the Lower House had been transferred to the new upper one, whilst the hundred members who had been excluded returned to the Lower House. Hence difficulties at once recurred; the Lower House discussed the functions and composition of the Upper House, and even the powers of the Protector himself; and in February, 1658, Parliament was dissolved. Seven months later, on September 3,<sup>1</sup> Cromwell died, with the problem of how to combine popular control with his own rule still unsolved.

Death of  
Cromwell.  
Sept. 3, 1658.

#### 4. Events leading to Restoration, 1658–60

Then follows the *Fourth Period*—a year and a half of great complexity, between 1658 and 1660. “There is not a dog that wags his tongue, so great a calm are we in”, wrote one man, when Richard, Cromwell's son, was made Protector. The calm was not to continue for long. A new Parliament met; the officers of the army quarrelled with it; and Richard, after trying to mediate, threw in his lot with the officers, and dissolved it. A fortnight later

Period IV:  
Sept., 1658–  
May, 1660.  
The Army and  
Parliament.

<sup>1</sup> The anniversary of Dunbar and Worcester.



Richard resigned.<sup>1</sup> The army decided to recall the "Rump". The "Rump"—consisting now of some sixty or seventy members—wanted to limit the powers of the new commander-in-chief, and to provide that in future all commissions in the army should be signed by the Speaker, and therefore to a certain extent be controlled by him. Moreover, they threatened the freedom of conscience so dear to the army. Eventually "Honest John" Lambert, the darling of the soldiers, a brave and generous if unstable man, surrounded the House and stopped the entrance of members, and once again the army was triumphant.

But then another general appeared, determined, with the aid of a large army and £70,000 in his treasury, to put an end to what he called the "intolerable slavery of sword government", and to call a free Parliament. This Monck and the Restoration. was the commander-in-chief in Scotland, George Monck. On December 8, 1659, he reached Coldstream; Lambert, who had gone north to meet him, found his army dwindling away, and was unable to do anything. Marching to London, Monck restored the members of the Long Parliament, including those originally evicted by Pride's Purge, but only so that they might make arrangements for a new and free Parliament being called. When these arrangements were completed, the elections took place amid great excitement; and a vast majority came back in favour of the restoration of the Stuarts. Monck had already suggested to Charles what proposals it was advisable for him to make. Charles adopted them in a Declaration which he issued to the English people from Breda. The Declaration was received with enthusiasm, and on May 29, 1660, Charles re-entered London, "the ways strewed with flowers, the bells ringing, the streets hung with tapestry, and the fountains running with wine". The Commonwealth was at an end.

The rule of Cromwell and the Commonwealth had certainly not been above criticism. It is quite arguable to say that individual liberty and the right of free speech were threatened to a greater degree under the Commonwealth than during the

<sup>1</sup> At the Restoration Cromwell had to fly to the Continent. He came back to England twenty years later, and died in 1712. "Gentle and virtuous, but became not greatness" is the verdict passed upon him by a contemporary.



reign of Charles I. Moreover, though taxation was three times heavier than it was during Charles I's reign, the Commonwealth had a deficit of half a million yearly. Again, if the Commonwealth showed toleration to Jews and Quakers, its treatment, if not of Anglicans, at all events of Roman Catholics, might be considered severe. And of course it is easy enough to scoff at the "rule of the saints by the sword", and ridicule their attempts to make men more virtuous by passing Acts against swearing and duelling, horse-racing, cock-fighting, and bear-baiting, and by trying to enforce more strictly the keeping of the Sabbath. Yet, for all that, there was much to admire. The Commonwealth government was, it has been said, a more tolerant one than any which had existed since the time of the Reformation. It maintained good order, and did, as a matter of fact, succeed in suppressing some amusements of a highly undesirable character. Its constitutional experiments were ingenious and interesting; and its attempts to reform the Court of Chancery and to reduce legal expenses wholly praiseworthy. Much of the work it attempted to do was, indeed, very modern in outlook—and that is, perhaps, why it failed at that time. Above all, its Foreign Policy raised England from the low position it had reached in the time of the Stuarts, whilst it has been said that no previous Government had such imperial instincts as Cromwell's.

### XXX. Foreign Policy, 1649-88; Greater Britain, 1603-88

England, it has been said, was more warlike during the period of the Commonwealth than she had been at any other time since the Hundred Years' War with France. But, as we have seen, till the end of 1651 the military energies of the Commonwealth Government were occupied in fighting its Royalist foes. Cromwell, on land, was winning Dunbar and Worcester; Blake, on sea, was sweeping Royalist privateers from the Channel and the Mediterranean, and forcing the colonies to recognize the rule of the Republic. In 1652, however, the Commonwealth was



free to interfere with its Continental neighbours; and with the best army in Europe, composed of some forty thousand men, and a fleet to which it added two hundred and seven ships, its interference proved to be of a decisive character.

Holland was England's first foe. It might have been expected that these two States, being both Republics and both Protestant, would have combined.<sup>1</sup> But England and Holland were keen commercial rivals. "We are fighting", said a member of the Long Parliament, "for the fairest mistress in the world—trade." Holland had, so far, been the conqueror. The Dutch had shut the English out from trade in the East Indies. They had almost acquired a monopoly of the carrying trade; they were, it was said, "the wagoners of all seas". In the autumn of 1651, however, the "Rump" Parliament passed a Navigation Act, by which goods coming to England were to be carried in English ships, or in ships belonging to the country from which the goods came.<sup>2</sup> If ever an Act, it has been said, did make a nation great, it was this one; and the enormous development of English shipping in the years that follow must be largely attributed to its influence. But in fostering English shipping this Act struck a heavy blow at the Dutch. Then other questions arose between the two nations. An informal "sort of a war" was going on between the English and French on sea, and England claimed to seize French goods on Dutch ships, a claim which the Dutch resisted. Finally, there was a question of honour; the English held that Dutch ships should lower their flag to English men-of-war in the Channel, and the Dutch were naturally averse to recognizing such a right. Over this point came a collision between the Dutch and English fleets near Dover, and then the war began (May, 1652).

In the war that ensued the English had the advantage of more solidly built and more heavily armed ships, and, though they were without such a great tactician as the Dutch possessed in Tromp, they had in Blake a commander who combined great

<sup>1</sup> A suggestion, indeed, for a political union was actually put forward by England, but it came to nothing.

<sup>2</sup> This policy was not, however, a new one, for Navigation Acts of one sort or another had been passed ever since the reign of Richard II, but they had not been effectively carried out.



care in the organization of his fleet with brilliant daring in action. The war, which lasted from 1652-4, was crowded with sea battles. Tromp defeated Blake off Dungeness in November, 1652, and obtained command of the Channel.<sup>1</sup> But in the following February, 1653, Blake regained the command after a three days' battle off Portland. The English ships were able to inflict great damage upon Holland's extensive commerce. In the course of the war no less than one thousand four hundred Dutch ships were captured, including one hundred and twenty men-of-war, and towards its close no Dutch merchantman could show itself in the Channel.

Incidents  
of war,  
1652-4.

Meanwhile, during the course of the war, Cromwell had become Protector (December, 1653). One great aim, of course, of Cromwell's foreign policy was to prevent the restoration of the Stuarts by foreign aid. His other two aims were to maintain and to extend, first, the Protestant religion, and then English commerce. Here Cromwell showed that intense religious feeling, combined with practical common sense, which has been noticed already. Cromwell at first pursued a policy of peace, and sought alliance with the Protestant powers. In April, 1654, the Dutch war came to an end. The Dutch agreed to salute our flag in British seas and to expel Royalists from their country, whilst they tacitly acquiesced in the Navigation Act. Treaties of alliance followed with Denmark, Sweden, and Portugal, which gave England important commercial concessions.

Cromwell's  
alliances,  
1654.

Cromwell's energy soon found a fresh opportunity for action. The Thirty Years' War had ended in Germany in 1648, but war still lingered on between Spain and France. Each of these powers was anxious to secure his support. But Cromwell's terms were high. He proposed to Spain that Englishmen should have liberty for the exercise of their religion in the Spanish dominions, and freedom of trade with the Spanish West Indies. "This is to ask for my master's two eyes", was the reply of the astonished Spanish ambassador.

The expedition  
to the West  
Indies, 1655.

<sup>1</sup> It was after this battle that Tromp was said to have put a broom at his masthead to show that he had swept the English off the sea; but such a story of so modest a man as Tromp is probably untrue.



Then Cromwell determined upon a colonial war with Spain. An expedition was sent to capture Hispaniola in the Spanish West Indies (1655).<sup>1</sup> But the attack upon that island was a disastrous failure. Jamaica, however, was captured, and Cromwell proceeded to colonize it with characteristic vigour.

The expedition to the West Indies by no means exhausted Cromwell's activity in 1655. Blake was sent to the Mediterranean on a cruise; he made a fine attack on Tunis, whose Bey had refused to give up some English prisoners, but the voyage is chiefly interesting as marking the beginning of England's activity in the Mediterranean Sea. In the same year some horrible atrocities committed by the Duke of Savoy, with the connivance of the French, on the Protestants who lived in the Vaudois valleys in Savoy, aroused angry protests from Cromwell.<sup>2</sup> The French king, therefore, anxious to secure Cromwell's alliance, put pressure upon the duke to stop the massacres, and Cromwell was regarded throughout Europe as the saviour of the Protestants.

Shortly after this successful intervention Cromwell made a treaty with France, and war was formally declared between England and Spain in the beginning of 1656. The year 1657 saw a great naval success. The English fleet, under Blake, found the Spanish treasure fleet at Santa Cruz, protected by the forts. Entering the harbour with the flowing tide, Blake succeeded, before he retired with the ebb tide, in sinking, blowing up, or burning every Spanish ship.<sup>3</sup> The following year (1658) it was the turn of the soldiers. The French and English determined to besiege Dunkirk, the possession of which would give the English "a bridle for the Dutch and a door into the Continent". Six thousand of the New Model Army combined with the French. They took the chief part in a battle waged near the fort, and earned for themselves the nickname of "the Immortals". Shortly after this Dunkirk fell. But then Cromwell died, and in the

The attack at Santa Cruz, 1657, and capture of Dunkirk, 1658.

<sup>1</sup> Such an expedition would not necessarily in those days involve a formal war between England and Spain in Europe.

<sup>2</sup> See Milton's celebrated Sonnet on "The Late Massacre in Piedmont".

<sup>3</sup> Blake died on his homeward journey on board his ship at the very entrance of Plymouth Sound, August 7, 1657.



confusion which followed nothing more could be done, "Cromwell's greatness at home", said Clarendon, "was a mere shadow of his greatness abroad"; and with this admission from the great Royalist historian we may be content to leave the study of the Commonwealth's foreign policy. The Commonwealth had done something, at all events, to restore the prestige which England had lost in Europe under the first two Stuarts.

England in the period of the Commonwealth had secured a position of great influence in Europe. With the return of the Stuarts, in 1660, she was soon to lose it. Between the restoration of Charles II, in 1660, and the revolution which his brother, James II, brought upon himself, after three years of rule, in 1688, there elapse twenty-eight years. During those years

Position of  
France under  
Louis XIV,  
1643-1715.

the King of France, Louis XIV, who reigned from 1643-1715, is the central figure in European politics. With the aid of a large revenue, capable ministers, and wonderful generals, he had already secured for the Crown, before the Restoration, absolute power at home and a pre-eminent position in Europe. By the time of the Revolution of 1688 his ambitions and resources were, as we shall see, a menace to every state in Europe.

Charles returned to England in 1660 under obligations to no foreign power. But from the first he was attracted towards

Charles II's  
policy  
towards  
France.

France. His mother was French; his cousin, Louis XIV, was such a king in France as he would have liked to be in England. Moreover, Charles wanted to foster the commercial welfare of England, and he looked upon Holland, not France, as the rival of the country over which he ruled. And so he married his sister, Henrietta, the only person whom he ever really loved, to the French Duke of Orleans, and he himself married Catherine of Braganza, the daughter of the King of Portugal, with whom Louis XIV was in alliance. Catherine, as her dowry, secured two useful possessions for England—Bombay, which Charles leased to the East India Company for the trivial rent of £10 a year, and Tangier, an important strategic port, which encouraged England to hope that "she might give the law to all the trade of the Mediterranean". Moreover, Charles sold Dunkirk to the French. The sale was un-



popular, but wise; for Dunkirk was expensive to keep up, useless strategically, and the king could not afford to maintain garrisons there as well as at Tangier.

Meantime the commercial ambitions of Holland and England, especially in Africa and the East Indies, led to continual disputes between the ships of the rival nations and to attacks upon each other's commerce.<sup>1</sup> The trade rivalry between the Dutch and the British was fierce, and the Government of Charles II was bombarded with petitions against the Dutch. Finally war was declared against Holland in 1665. In this war France was nominally in alliance with Holland, though she took no prominent part in the military operations, which were nearly all at sea. The battles were fiercely contested, and a large part was played in them by fire ships—the torpedo boats of that time. The king's brother, James, Duke of York, won a great battle off *Lowestoft*, in which, with the loss of one ship, he inflicted on the Dutch a loss of twelve ships.<sup>2</sup> In the next year (1666) Monck and Rupert, no longer generals on land but "generals at sea", unfortunately separated their fleets, and Monck was defeated in a battle lasting for four days, though his ships behaved well and "fought", it was said, "like a line of cavalry handled according to rule". In 1667 an indelible disgrace was inflicted upon England. Lack of money caused Charles to lay up his ships.<sup>3</sup> The Dutch, taking advantage of this, sailed up the Medway as far as Chatham, and captured or destroyed sixteen ships. England was lucky to be able, only six weeks later, to make a peace at *Breda*, by which she obtained, in North America, New Jersey and New Amsterdam—afterwards called, in honour of the duke, New York.

Second  
Dutch War,  
1665-7.

Barely a year later (1668) the Peace of Breda developed into a Triple Alliance of England, Holland, and Sweden, with the object of opposing Louis XIV. The Alliance was a popular one in England, but there is reason to suppose that Charles

<sup>1</sup> Two English companies—the Turkish Company and the East India Company—estimated their losses, in consequence of Dutch depredations, at £700,000.

<sup>2</sup> After the battle James went to bed, and, as a consequence of misunderstood orders, the Dutch fleet was not pursued.

<sup>3</sup> No doubt Charles's personal extravagance was partly responsible for the lack of money, but the chief reason was that the war cost much more than was anticipated, while the taxes which Parliament had voted brought in a good deal less.



had only consented to it in order later to bring upon the Dutch<sup>1</sup> the wrath of the French king. At all events, within a week of the formation of the Alliance, he was intriguing with Louis XIV, and long negotiations, in which the Duchess of Orleans took a prominent part, finally ended in the disgraceful *Treaty of Dover* (1670). By that treaty, first, Holland was to be partitioned, and Charles, in return for his military support, was to receive a subsidy; secondly, Charles was to declare himself a Roman Catholic "at a convenient opportunity", and, on making the declaration, was to receive from Louis an additional grant of money, and, if necessary, a force of soldiers, in order to be able to repress any disturbance that might occur. Of this latter portion of the treaty only two ministers<sup>2</sup> in England were informed; but, in order to deceive the other ministers and the nation, a "sham treaty" was drawn up, which had reference only to the proposed war with the Dutch. With the treaty of Dover the creditable portion of Charles's foreign policy terminates. In the war which followed in 1672 the Dutch made an heroic resistance. They cut their dykes and surrendered part of their land to the sea, in order to preserve it from the French; and their fleet, though defeated off *Southwold Bay*, more than held its own in the latter portion of the war. In 1674 England was glad to make peace. The power of Holland, however, was broken, and gradually a large portion of her trade fell into English hands.

From 1674 to 1688 England ceases to be of importance in foreign affairs. Occasionally the king showed some independence of France, as, in 1677, when the Princess Mary, the daughter of the Duke of York, married William of Orange, the ruler of Holland. But for the greater part of the time the English kings were the pensioners of Louis XIV. That monarch paid Charles II large sums of money for the prorogation of Parliament, and when he seemed to be too independent he bribed the Opposition in Parliament instead. Finally, Charles, a year before he died, gave up Tangier in order to please

<sup>1</sup> Charles disliked the Dutch: "stinking Dutchmen" he was once rude enough to call them.

<sup>2</sup> Clifford and Arlington, both Roman Catholics, and both members of the "Cabal" ministry (p. 412).



Louis XIV. When James II came to the throne, in 1685, the French ambassador was the chief supporter of his disastrous policy. Meantime Louis XIV's powers and ambitions were extending, and when the Revolution of 1688 came, his ascendancy was threatening all Europe.

From the history of English foreign policy we may turn to the history of the British Empire in the seventeenth century, for the two are not disconnected. The British Empire, when James I ascended the throne in 1603, was non-existent. Attempts had been made to colonize Virginia, but they had failed; the East India Company had been formed in 1600 for the promotion of trade with the East, but its first expedition had not returned from the East Indies when Elizabeth died.<sup>1</sup> With the Stuarts, however, the beginnings of Empire came, and the seventeenth century is, therefore, from an imperial as well as from a domestic point of view, a very important one. And it is worth pointing out that the successful development of this Empire in the seventeenth century was largely due to private enterprise.

*Beginnings  
of Empire,  
1603-88.*

We may turn to affairs in the East first. It was under Portuguese auspices that the route to India and the Far East by the Cape of Good Hope had been discovered in 1502, and during the sixteenth century Portugal had been successful in preserving a monopoly of the Eastern trade for her own merchants.<sup>2</sup> But in the seventeenth century both the Dutch and English nations determined to secure some share in that trade. In the Far East the Dutch proved themselves persistent and intrepid traders. The Dutch East India Company conquered the Spice Islands from the Portuguese, and established their own supremacy. The English East India Company also endeavoured to trade in the Far East, but the Dutch Company was wealthier and stronger. Disputes between Dutch and English occurred, and culminated in the massacre at *Amboyna* (1623), when ten Englishmen were executed on a trumped-up charge of conspiring with some Japanese soldiers

*Dutch supremacy in  
Far East.*

<sup>1</sup> It returned six months after James's accession with one million pounds of pepper.

<sup>2</sup> A few Englishmen did, however, succeed in reaching India in the reign of Elizabeth. The first Englishman known to have visited India was a Jesuit, Stephens by name, in 1579.



against the Dutch governor of that place.<sup>1</sup> Soon after this the English practically gave up their attempts to compete with the Dutch for trade in the Far East, and they did not re-enter the contest till the close of the eighteenth century.

On the mainland of India the English East India Company met with greater success. It had to encounter the hostility of the Portuguese, but, despite that, it managed to prosper. In 1612 it established its first depot for goods, or "factory", as it was called, at *Surat*, on the west coast of India.<sup>2</sup> Others followed at *Madras* (1639), *Bombay* (1661), and *Calcutta* (1690). At the close of the seventeenth century a rival company to the East India Company was started in England; but the two companies amalgamated in 1709, and the united company quickly developed trade. So far the object of the English in India had been merely the extension of trade; how the East India Company in later years obtained an empire in India which stretched from Cape Comorin to the Himalayas must be explained in a later chapter.

Meantime, whilst the English merchants were developing a substantial trade in the East, English colonists had built up many settlements in the West. The first successful attempt was made in *Virginia*. In May, 1607, some hundred emigrants landed in Chesapeake Bay and founded the settlement of Jamestown. But the colony had great difficulties at first, though, when the adventurous Captain John Smith<sup>3</sup> was for a short time President in 1608, things progressed more favourably. The colony did not, however, really prosper until the arrival of Lord De la Warr in 1610. His short governorship

<sup>1</sup> No reparation was extracted from the Dutch for this flagrant injustice for thirty-one years; then Cromwell insisted on a large money indemnity being paid to the English company and to the relatives of the executed men.

<sup>2</sup> Leave would not have been obtained from the native ruler for this factory to be established but for the fact that Captain Thomas Best had won a great reputation for the English in that same year by defeating, on four successive occasions, an overwhelming force of Portuguese ships.

<sup>3</sup> If his autobiography may be believed, John Smith had fought against the Spaniards in the Low Countries and the Turks in Hungary. He had been thrown overboard by the crew of a French ship in a storm because he was considered a Huguenot. Saved by another ship, he had again fought against the Turks, and defeated three Turkish champions in single combat. Subsequently he was taken prisoner and sold as a slave; but he killed his master, a Turkish pasha, made his escape, and returned to England.



was the turning-point in the early history of Virginia, and the colonists soon received large reinforcements in numbers from the mother country.

Then, in 1620, came the foundation of the Puritan colonies farther north. Many Puritans had fled, during Elizabeth's reign, from England in consequence of persecution, and settled in Holland. One hundred of these men got leave from James to found an English colony in America. Returning to England, the "Pilgrim Fathers", as they came to be called, started from Plymouth on board the *Mayflower*, landed in Cape Cod Harbour, and founded the little settlement of New Plymouth. The misgovernment and intolerance of Charles led to their numbers being largely augmented before long; indeed, it is said that nearly twenty thousand colonists sailed from Old to New England, as the group of the more northern colonies was called, between the accession of Charles I and the meeting of the Long Parliament in 1640.<sup>1</sup> And so the northern colonies, of which *Massachusetts* became far the most important, were gradually formed.

The reign of Charles II proved an extremely important one in the history of our American colonies. For one thing, *North and South Carolina* were founded. But, above all, the territories of the English in America became continuous. The Dutch had colonized the territory which lay between the northern and southern settlements of the English. In the Dutch war of 1665, however, an expedition was sent, and these colonies were captured; and in the subsequent peace the Dutch formally relinquished them. New Amsterdam became *New York*, and the colonies of *New Jersey*, *Delaware*, and *Pennsylvania* were established.

Of the relations between England and her American colonies we shall have something to say later on; it is sufficient to say here that to most of them an English governor was sent out, and that the degree of independence enjoyed by each colony varied. But, like all

<sup>1</sup> There is a story, though there is no reliable evidence to support it, that in 1636 Cromwell and John Hampden, despairing of their country, took their passage to America, but that the vessel was stopped by an order in Council.



mother countries at that time, England regarded her colonies as a source of wealth, and the colonial trade was carefully regulated for the benefit of English merchants. As to the character of the colonies themselves, there were striking differences between them. The "New England" colonists<sup>1</sup> were Puritans by religion, inclined to be democratic in government, and they were hard-working, keen, if somewhat austere men. The southern colonies<sup>2</sup> were more aristocratic, and in them the Church of England was established by law. Here the climate was hot, and the chief products were tobacco and rice, the cultivation of which was worked by slaves. The colonists were owners of plantations, many of them being very large plantations. The central colonies<sup>3</sup> were composed of somewhat heterogeneous elements, and every variety of race and religion might be found in one or other of them. With such differences between these various groups, it was not likely that the colonies would find combination an easy matter, and indeed there were continual disputes, chiefly about boundaries, between them. Unity was not to come till the oppression of the mother country—or what was considered by the colonists to be oppression—roused the colonies to common action in 1775; and less than a century after this the underlying differences between the North and the South were to produce the American Civil War of 1861.

Of the other parts of our Empire developed or acquired in the seventeenth century we must say little. In the West Indies the small island of Barbados was successfully colonized <sup>Other parts of Empire.</sup> in 1626.<sup>4</sup> The resources of Jamaica, captured by Cromwell in 1655, were quickly developed, and this island was also the home of the Buccaneers<sup>5</sup> who preyed upon Spanish commerce in the Caribbean Sea. Meantime, settlements were made in Newfoundland and the Bahamas, whilst various points on the West African coast were secured, and in 1651 St. Helena was occupied by the East India Company.

<sup>1</sup> Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island.

<sup>2</sup> i.e. Virginia, Maryland, North and South Carolina, and Georgia, which was founded in 1732.

<sup>3</sup> i.e. New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware.

<sup>4</sup> Barbados was stoutly Royalist, and held out against the Commonwealth until 1652.

<sup>5</sup> The most famous of these is perhaps Captain Dampier,



# XXXI. Domestic Affairs, 1660-88, in England and Scotland

## I. England

We must now trace the internal history of the twenty-eight years that elapse between the Restoration of 1660 and the Revolution of 1688. Something may be said first of the two kings, of Charles II, who reigned till 1685, and of his brother, James II, who reigned till 1688.

With the Restoration we are conscious of a lowering in the ideals of the nation. Both the rival parties in the previous troubles had produced fine personalities, men actuated by lofty motives, and exhibiting nobility of character. With the Restoration we begin, it has been said, the life of modern England, and the Age of Heroics gives way to the Age of Common Sense.

Charles was a king in keeping with such an epoch. Since the age of fifteen he had been, but for the brief campaign in 1651, an exile from his country, and now he entered London as king, in 1660, on his thirtieth birthday. He had the Englishman's love of exercise—he was devoted to tennis<sup>1</sup> and hunting, and would often walk from Whitehall to Hampton Court. But in business he was sometimes indolent, and his frivolity was incurable. "Naturally I am more lazy than I ought to be," was his own frank confession; and he was engaged in chasing a poor moth, so it is said, whilst the Dutch guns were heard roaring in the Thames. He was thoroughly selfish and unprincipled, and prepared to sacrifice religion, friends, or ministers, if he found such a course the more convenient for his own interests. Moreover, his life in exile had been a very demoralizing one for him, and when he returned to England his Court was notorious for its licence and corruption, and for the evil influence exercised by women such as Lady Castlemaine and the Duchess of Portsmouth. Finally, he was at heart a Catholic, but was too prudent in politics, or too luke-warm in faith, to venture to declare himself.

Characters of  
Charles II  
and James II.

<sup>1</sup> He used to play in the summer at 5 o'clock in the morning.



James's own life was not above reproach, but in some respects he was a better man than Charles. In his brother's reign, James earned as a soldier the praise of a French general, and as a sailor he fought well at sea and administered the navy with tolerable efficiency at Whitehall. He possessed energy and sincerity, and he proved himself a kind master and father. Yet Charles had many more interests than James in Nature, in Science<sup>1</sup>, and in Art. He was more good-humoured, and he had a gift of wit which was denied to James. Moreover, he was a far abler man. "The king", said one observer, "could see things if he would; the Duke (i.e. James, then Duke of York) would see things if he could." James was a bigot, a man given to extremes in all things. He was an ardent Roman Catholic, and those who did not agree with him must be heretics; he was a believer in absolute monarchy, and those who opposed him were rebels. Charles, though of the same opinions, and not without a certain persistency in endeavouring to support them, was more pliable, more tactful, content to bide his time, and determined above all things "not to go on his travels again". James, perhaps, succeeded to a more difficult situation, but the differences in their respective characters largely account for the fact that whilst Charles reigned for twenty-five years and found himself in a stronger position at the end of his rule than he was at its beginning, James's reign came to an abrupt conclusion in less than four years.

Charles had made four promises in his *Declaration* signed at *Breda* before his return to England, the performance of these promises, however, being conditional upon the consent of Parliament. *First, Arrears of pay* were promised to the soldiers. These were paid, and the new Model Army, with the exception of a regiment known as the Coldstream Guards, was disbanded. *Secondly*, Charles had promised a *general amnesty*. Charles himself was not revengeful, and was quite willing to forgive and to forget. Parliament, however, in the Act of Indemnity and Oblivion which it passed made many exceptions. Thirteen regicides (i.e. those that had signed the death warrant of Charles I) were executed and twenty-five persons were imprisoned for life, whilst Cromwell's body was

<sup>1</sup> The Royal Society was founded in Charles II's time.



barbarously dug up, hanged at Tyburn, and buried under the gallows.<sup>1</sup>

*Thirdly*, Charles had promised *security of tenure* to those who had obtained land under the Commonwealth. The land question proved a very complicated one. Eventually it was settled that all lands belonging to the Church and the Crown, and all lands which had been confiscated by the Commonwealth Government, should be returned to their previous owners, whilst the private sales of land held good, though they had been often made in order to pay the heavy fines inflicted upon recalcitrant Royalists by the Commonwealth. It was a compromise which pleased neither party and inflicted hardship on both; but perhaps this could hardly be avoided.

So far matters had been settled by the Convention Parliament, but this Parliament found itself unable to come to an agreement over the *fourth* promise of Charles—the *promise of liberty of conscience*. Charles had tried to effect a compromise through a conference between leading ecclesiastics; but the attempt was a failure, and it was left to a new Parliament to deal with the question. That Parliament is known in history as the Cavalier Parliament, and it lasted from 1661 to 1679. It was remarkable during the first few years of its existence for its exuberant Royalism; indeed, it was more Royalist, so the saying went, than the king himself.

The Cavalier  
Parliament,  
1661-79.

On the religious question the Cavalier Parliament proved itself to be more Anglican than even the ordinary High Churchman, and between 1661 and 1665 four Acts were passed against the Puritans.

The Clarendon  
Code, 1661-3.

By the first of these Acts, the *Corporation Act*, no one could be a member of the municipal bodies which governed the towns and controlled the election of Members of Parliament unless he took an oath denying the lawfulness, under any pretext whatever, of taking up arms against the king, and received the Communion according to the rites of the Church of England. This Act sought to deprive the Puritans of their hold upon the towns and the House of Commons. By the *Act of Uniformity* every clergyman and schoolmaster was obliged to take

<sup>1</sup> The site is in Connaught Square.



a similar oath of non-resistance and declare his "unfeigned consent and assent" to everything contained in the Book of Common Prayer, in which six hundred alterations had just been made, of a trivial character mostly, it is true, but in an anti-Puritan direction. No less than two thousand clergymen refused to conform to this Act, and were deprived of their livings. By the *Five-Mile Act* these two thousand dispossessed clergymen were not allowed to come within five miles of their former livings or of any corporate town unless they took the non-resistance oath imposed by the Corporation Act, and promised not "to endeavour at any time any alteration of government either in church or state". By the *Conventicle Act* religious meetings—other than those of the Church of England—were forbidden, under penalty of imprisonment for the first, and transportation for the third, offence. These Acts helped to complete the severance between the Church of England and the more advanced Puritans. They are sometimes known as the *Clarendon Code*. But this is unjust, because, though Clarendon was the chief minister at the time, neither he nor the king was the instigator of those laws; and the king himself was no persecutor.

The Amnesty, the Land, and the Religious Questions had all been settled, at least temporarily, but one problem still remained which no party in the State had hitherto satisfactorily solved—how were the powers of the Monarchy and the Parliament to be harmonized?

Powers of the  
Crown after  
1660.

It might appear, at first sight, that the Monarchy, at the Restoration, recovered all its old authority. The king, as before, chose his own ministers and conducted the home and foreign policy of the country. Though feudal dues were abolished, the king was granted by Parliament a revenue for life from customs and excise. In one respect, indeed, Charles was more powerful than his predecessors in that he had a small standing army of some five thousand men, which was increased as the reign progressed.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>A regiment of foot (the Coldstream) and a regiment of horse (the Blues—so called from their uniforms) were made up of "New Model" soldiers; besides these there were the regiment of Grenadiers, composed chiefly of Cavaliers, and two troops of Life Guards, whilst a troop of horse and a regiment of foot, known later as the Royal Dragoons and the Queen's Regiment, were required for the defence of Tangier. The Royal Scots and the Buffs were



But, in reality, the king was not in his old position of power. The arbitrary courts, such as the Star Chamber, were no longer in existence. The Restoration, it has been said, was not only a restoration of the Monarchy but of the Parliament as well, and the wishes of that Parliament could no longer be ignored. "The King of France", said a shrewd observer, "can make his subjects march as he pleases; but the King of England must march with his people." Moreover, in 1667 the Parliament made a great advance; it secured that additional grants of money to the Crown should be appropriated for particular objects, and that a Parliamentary audit should be made to ensure that the money was so expended.

During the first seven years of Charles's reign (1660-7), Lord Clarendon, the author of the famous *History of the Rebellion*, was the chief minister; indeed he had such influence that Charles, a contemporary said, was but "half a king" whilst he was in power. As Edward Hyde, Clarendon had been a member of the Long Parliament, and had approved of its measures until the Grand Remonstrance was brought forward. Though not responsible for the Clarendon Code, he was perhaps too intolerant a High Churchman; but he was moderate in politics, upright and hard-working, and his great object was to establish a balance of power as between King and Parliament. Partly in consequence of his very moderation, he became in time unpopular with all classes. The king got tired of his lectures; the courtiers sneered at his morality; the Royalists disliked him for his supposed leniency to the Puritans over the amnesty and the land questions; whilst the Nonconformists hated him for the Code. Moreover, the marriage of his daughter, Anne Hyde, with James, Duke of York, the king's brother, made him appear self-seeking; and the sale of Dunkirk to France, for which Louis XIV, the French king, was said to have bribed him,<sup>1</sup> caused him to be accused of corruption.

The Ministry  
of Clarendon,  
1660-7.

also created in Charles II's reign, the one being recruited from Scotsmen who had fought for the King of France, and the other from those who had served under the banner of Holland. The Scots Greys were also formed in Charles II's reign.

<sup>1</sup> According to Pepys, the Diarist, the common people called the great house which Clarendon was building for himself, in Piccadilly, Dunkirk House, "from their opinion of his having a good bribe for the selling of that towne".



Clarendon's unpopularity was increased by two disasters for which he was in no way responsible. The Great Plague of 1665 killed one-fifth of the population of London,<sup>1</sup> besides raging in the provinces. The Great Fire in the following year swept away two-thirds of London's houses, and not far short of a hundred of its churches, including St. Paul's; it was indeed fortunate for England that she had Sir Christopher Wren to rebuild so many of them.<sup>2</sup> Finally, in 1667, the whole nation held Clarendon responsible for the appearance of the Dutch fleet up the Thames. And so Clarendon was dismissed by the king, was impeached by Parliament, and retired into exile.

With Clarendon's fall, Charles largely directed his own policy. For the next five years (1667-73) his chief ministers were five in number, and came to be known from the initial letters of their names as the *Cabal* Ministry. Two of them, Clifford and Arlington, were Roman Catholics.

The Cabal Ministry, 1667-73. Buckingham, the third member of the group, was "everything by turns, and nothing long"; in the fickleness of his opinions, the changeableness of his occupations, and the immorality of his life he was highly characteristic of that epoch. The fourth, Ashley Cooper, afterwards Lord Shaftesbury, was a person who was accused of changing sides always at the right moment for himself. He was undoubtedly a very able statesman. He was, in religious matters, in favour of toleration. He was keenly interested in colonial and trade development, and thus a supporter of the war against the Dutch. And he is regarded by some historians as the first great party leader in the modern sense, and as the founder of modern Parliamentary oratory. Lauderdale, the last of the five, and perhaps the wickedest, governed Scotland.

The Cabal, however, was in no respect like a modern Cabinet. Its members were not of the same opinions; they had no leader; and they were not consulted together. It was during the existence of the Cabal that there came the Triple Alliance, the secret Treaty of Dover—of which only Clifford and Arlington knew—and the Third Dutch War (p. 402). Just before the Dutch War

<sup>1</sup> For four months previous to the arrival of the Plague there had been no rain, and this made the capital very insanitary.

<sup>2</sup> Wren built St. Paul's and fifty-two churches in London.



began, Charles, in accordance with his agreement with Louis XIV, tried to secure toleration for Roman Catholics, and incidentally for Dissenters' as well, by issuing what was called a *Declaration of Indulgence*, suspending the penal laws against Roman Catholics and Dissenters (1672). But Parliament objected, and Charles had not only to withdraw the Declaration, but to agree to a *Test Act* by which no one was to hold any office of State who refused to take the sacrament according to the Church of England (1673). This Act caused the Duke of York to retire from the Admiralty, and Clifford and Arlington to retire from the Ministry. Charles then dismissed Shaftesbury, and the Cabal Ministry came to an end (1673).

The Declaration of Indulgence, 1672, and the Test Act, 1673.

For the next few years (1673-8) Charles's chief minister was *Danby*, who was an Anglican in religion, and the king gave up, for the time, his attempts to restore Roman Catholicism in England. These years are a maze of intrigues. The Cavalier Parliament was getting restive. Shaftesbury, on being dismissed by the king, had at once begun to organize an opposition in both Houses, which soon became formidable. Meantime the French king was at one time subsidizing Charles in order to get Parliament prorogued, and at another trying to bribe the Opposition to oppose the king. The nation was nervous and uneasy. Then an event happened which made it panic-stricken.

Ministry of Danby, 1673-8.

In the autumn of 1678 a man called Titus Oates made a statement to a London magistrate declaring the existence of a *Popish plot*, the objects of which were to murder the king, to put the Duke of York in his place and to bring a French army into England. Shortly afterwards the magistrate was found dead, having been obviously murdered. At once the nation, always in dread of Popish plots, took alarm, and a panic began. Every word of Titus Oates was believed, though he was really a thorough scoundrel.<sup>1</sup> Other informers sprang up in every direction; and Roman Catholics were tried and executed on the flimsiest evidence. Protestants carried flails

The Popish Plot, 1678.

<sup>1</sup> He had been expelled successively from his school, the Navy, and two Jesuit Colleges, besides having had writs issued against him on two occasions for perjury.



to protect themselves from imaginary Roman Catholic assaults, whilst the Houses of Parliament without one dissentient declared a "damnable and hellish plot" to be in existence. Of course there was in a sense a plot—in which Charles himself was implicated by the Treaty of Dover—to restore Catholicism in England, but the details of this particular plot were a pure fabrication. Shaftesbury and the Opposition, however, made unscrupulous use of the plot. For they were anxious to divert the succession from Charles II's brother James to an illegitimate son of the king's, known as the Duke of Monmouth; and they hoped that this proposal would, in consequence of the alleged plot, meet with much popular support.

In the same autumn (1678) some negotiations which Danby had, by Charles's command, undertaken for the supply of money from the French king were discovered, and Danby was impeached. Charles, to save him, dissolved the Cavalier Parliament, which had sat since 1661 (January, 1679). There followed in a space of two years three short Parliaments (1679-81). The first of these insisted upon committing Danby to the Tower despite the king's pardon, thereby developing the principle of the responsibility of ministers. It also passed, through Shaftesbury's influence, a very important *Habeas Corpus Act*, the object of which was to ensure that a man who was imprisoned should be brought up for trial as soon as possible.

In all three of these short Parliaments, however, the chief topic was the Bill for excluding James from the succession.

Shaftesbury and the Opposition pressed for the succession of the Duke of Monmouth, who, they held, was a legitimate son of Charles, the marriage certificate of his mother with Charles being secreted (so it was alleged) in a certain "black box". Charles, however, said he would rather see his son hanged than legitimize him. It was during this time that Political Parties were first organized. At first they were known under the names of *Petitioners* and *Abhorrrers*, from the fact that one party petitioned for the calling of Parliament, whilst the other expressed their abhorrence of any encroachment on the king's Prerogative; later they came to be called by their respective opponents, *Whigs*

Three short  
Parliaments,  
1679-80.

The Ex-  
clusion Bill.



after the name of certain fanatical Whig Covenanters, and *Tories* after some wild Irish Roman Catholic rebels; and the names are still in use to our own day. The last of the three Parliaments was summoned by the king to meet not in London, where the mob was fiercely hostile to the Court, but at Oxford in Christ Church Hall; and men came armed—so great was the excitement. But it had only lasted a week when Charles dissolved it, and the Exclusion Bill was still unpassed (1681).

A reaction in favour of the king followed the Oxford Parliament. The execution of Lord Stafford, a blameless Roman Catholic peer of over seventy years of age, for alleged complicity in the Popish Plot, made people realize the wildness of the exaggerations which they had hitherto believed. It was felt that the Opposition had gone too far, and there was no desire for another Civil War. Consequently, for the last four years of his reign (1681-5) Charles, with the aid of a congenial ministry nicknamed "the Chits", from their youth, was able to persecute his enemies, whilst lavish grants from Louis XIV enabled him to do without a Parliament. Shaftesbury had to flee to Holland and the Duke of Monmouth was banished. The *Ryehouse Plot*—a plot for murdering the king on his way from Newmarket—gave Charles an opportunity of executing, though quite unjustly, Russell and Sidney, both prominent Whigs (1683). The king, also, by means of a writ called *Quo Warranto*, "remodelled" the Charters of London and sixty-five provincial towns, the strongholds of the Whigs, and vested the right of electing Members of Parliament to represent these boroughs in governing bodies nominated by himself. Yet Charles had no wish to play the part of a tyrant; all he wanted was to get free from the control of any other authority, and in this apparently he had completely succeeded before his death, which occurred in February, 1685.

*James II* succeeded without difficulty (February, 1685) on his brother's death. People felt that he had been treated hardly over the Exclusion Bill, and he had the support of all moderate people. Parliament, enthusiastically loyal, voted him a large income; and even when the fabricators of the Popish Plot were most barbarously treated—Oates received



three thousand four hundred lashes in three days<sup>1</sup>—it was felt that they had only got what they deserved.

Moreover, the successful crushing of two rebellions strengthened the king's position. *Argyll* in Scotland rose in support of Monmouth; but he could only get some of Monmouth's Rebellion, 1685. his own clan, the Campbells, to help him, and he was captured and beheaded. *Monmouth* himself landed in Dorset, and persuaded the country people of that county and of Somerset to join him in large numbers. He tried a night attack upon the king's forces at *Sedgemoor*, which might have been successful but for the fact that an unsuspected and impassable ditch stopped his advance. As it was, the attack failed, and Monmouth was subsequently captured and then executed (July, 1685). The Chief Justice, Jeffreys by name, accompanied by four other judges, was sent down to the West to try the rebels, and, in what is called "the Bloody Assize", hanged over three hundred and transported some eight hundred,<sup>2</sup> thus bringing upon himself a reputation for cruelty which will last as long as history is read.

For the first nine months of his reign, till towards the close of 1685, James himself behaved with some moderation. The ease with which the two risings were quelled, however, James's tyranny, 1685-88. encouraged him to a more extreme policy. He increased the numbers of the standing army, which was a very unpopular institution, to thirty thousand men. He began a systematic policy of officering it with Roman Catholics, by making use of the *dispensing power*, a power by which the judges held he was able to dispense, in the case of particular individuals, with the laws passed against the Roman Catholics. He changed his ministers, moderate men like Halifax or High Churchmen like Rochester giving way to Roman Catholics and recent converts to that religion like Sunderland; and in Ireland he made Tyrconnel, a bigoted Roman Catholic, viceroy. He showed his intention of converting the University of Oxford by appointing

<sup>1</sup> Oates subsequently joined the sect of Baptists, and used often to preach from the pulpit of Wapping Chapel; but he was finally expelled by the sect "as a disorderly person and a hypocrite".

<sup>2</sup> These eight hundred were presented to various courtiers, who sold them to slavery in the West Indian plantations.



a Roman Catholic to the Deanery of Christ Church and by substituting Roman Catholic for Protestant Fellows at Magdalen College; and therefore incurred the hostility of that University, which had always been the most loyal supporter of the House of Stuart. He re-established the High Commission Court and issued a *Declaration of Indulgence*, suspending the penal laws against the Roman Catholics and Dissenters. He prorogued and finally dissolved his first Parliament (July, 1687), and he then made preparations for "packing" another one by calling on the Lords-Lieutenant to provide him with a list of Roman Catholics and Nonconformists suitable as Members—a demand which led most of them to resign.

Such conduct on the part of James alienated not only those classes who had fought against his father but also the classes—the country gentlemen and the clergy—who had fought for him. In the early summer of 1688 the crisis came. In *May*, the king issued a *second Declaration of Indulgence*, and ordered it to be read in churches. The Archbishop of Canterbury and six other bishops drew up a protest, and James decided to try them for libel. On *June 10* a son was born to James by his second wife, Mary of Modena. People had so far been content to await the advent of a new reign, in the hope that James's Protestant daughter Mary and her husband William of Orange, the ruler of Holland and a strong Protestant, would succeed. But now James had a successor who would be educated as a Roman Catholic. Moreover, it was widely believed that the child was not really the child of James and his wife, but had been brought into the palace in a warming-pan. On *June 30* the Seven Bishops were acquitted, and on that night there was a scene of indescribable enthusiasm and rejoicing in London. On the same evening seven men of importance, representing different shades of opinion, met and drew up a letter inviting William to bring an army over to England and to restore to its people their liberties.<sup>1</sup>

The crisis,  
May-June  
30, 1688.

At this moment Louis XIV offered James his assistance.

<sup>1</sup> The letter was signed in cipher and conveyed by Admiral Herbert (afterwards Lord Torrington), who, disguised as a common sailor, managed to reach the Dutch coast in safety.



James, not appreciating his danger, refused it. Fortunately for William, Louis then moved his troops from the Netherlands frontier to wage a campaign in Germany. With Holland no longer threatened by a French army, William felt himself justified in coming to England, especially as he had received assurances of help from leaders of the English army and navy. He landed at Torbay on November 5, 1688, and received support at once. Later he was joined by John Churchill (afterwards the famous Duke of Marlborough), the chief man in the army, whilst an insurrection, supported by Anne, James's second daughter, took place in Yorkshire. James tried conciliation, but it was already too late. He then tried flight, and was ignominiously brought back to London. Finally, William, having arrived in London, sent James to Rochester. There only lax guard was kept over him, and James again escaped—to William's great satisfaction—and at 3 a.m. on Christmas Day, 1688, landed in France. James's reign was over,<sup>1</sup> and so at last was the long struggle of King and Parliament. The Revolution of 1688 was, as we shall see, to produce wide-reaching changes in our system of government.

## 2. Scotland under the Commonwealth and later Stuarts, 1651-88

At the Battle of Worcester, 1651, the Scottish army was destroyed as a fighting force, and Scotland was occupied by an English army and subjugated. Till the Restoration in 1660 she was governed, on the whole successfully, by George Monck and English Commissioners. Taxation, it is true, was heavy, but justice was done in civil and criminal cases far more effectively than ever before. The tyranny of the Presbyterian Church was broken, and some efforts in the direction of toleration were made. The Highlands were pacified and good order maintained throughout Scotland.<sup>2</sup> Above all,

Scotland under the Commonwealth, 1651-60.

<sup>1</sup> During his first flight, on December 11, James had thrown the "Great Seal" into the Thames at Vauxhall, the seal being the symbol of authority without which no deed of Government was valid. This date was subsequently taken as the legal date of James's "abdication".

<sup>2</sup> "A man may ride over all Scotland", said a contemporary, "with a switch in his hand and a hundred pounds in his pocket, which he could not have done these five hundred years."



Scotland secured Free Trade with England, and her prosperity was, as a consequence, greatly developed.

Then came the Restoration. One result of it was that Scotland lost her Free Trade with England, though she recovered her independence. Another was that the supreme authority of the king was restored. And along with his supremacy in political affairs Charles desired to have supremacy in ecclesiastical matters. So he restored Episcopacy in Scotland and determined to maintain it at all costs. The Presbyterians, who had had things their own way from 1638 to 1651, still pressed for the execution of the provisions of the Solemn League and Covenant (see p. 376). But the king in his zeal for Episcopacy was as extreme and intolerant as were they in their claims for Presbyterianism. All existing holders of livings had to be reinstituted by bishops and had to renounce the Covenants. Many ministers, especially in the South-west, refused, and they were, in consequence, "outed" from their charges, and their places were taken by others, often by uneducated and vicious men. People who refused to go to church were fined, and laws of ever increasing severity were passed against persons attending "Conventicles", as religious meetings held outside church were called. There was a good deal of persecution, particularly after a Covenanting rising in 1666. Lauderdale, who became Royal Commissioner in 1667, did attempt reconciliation, but there was little response, and the Covenanters began to hold their meetings in lonely and inaccessible moorlands. Consequently Government efforts to put them down increased in ferocity, dragoons being employed to hunt Covenanters, often with ruthless injustice, and in 1678 a horde of 8000 Highlanders was brought to the South-west, where it spoiled, murdered, and looted.

Scotland and the Restoration.

Episcopacy Restored, 1661-62.

The Covenanters.

Early in 1679 James Sharp, Archbishop of St. Andrews, who had deserted the Covenanters and had become one of the main persecutors, was done to death by some fanatics, and a few weeks later a body of Covenanters declared their defiance of all civil authority. At Drumclog, in Lanarkshire, they defeated Graham of Claverhouse, who had been sent to suppress Conventicles.

Murder of Sharp; Drumclog, and Bothwell Bridge, 1679.



Elated by their small victory, they marched on Glasgow, but were met at Bothwell Bridge on the river Clyde and defeated by Monmouth.

For a time after Bothwell Bridge Scotland was treated with more moderation, but when James, Duke of York, afterwards James VII, became Royal Commissioner in Scotland in 1681, The "Killing Time", 1680-1687. the "Killing Time" began, and there was a fierce persecution of the Presbyterian zealots, or Cameronians as they were called from their leader Richard Cameron. Persecution reached its height with the accession of James to the throne in 1685, the increased intensity being perhaps a result of the futile rebellion of the Earl of Argyll in support of Monmouth (p. 416). In 1687, however, James granted an Indulgence to Presbyterians and Roman Catholics alike. This James VII and II, 1685-1688. put an end to persecution, and gave the Presbyterians liberty "to serve God after their own way and manner", but it also paved the way for the introduction of Roman Catholicism which James so eagerly desired, and it was accompanied by the dismissal of Protestants from offices of State and their replacement by Roman Catholics, and by the handing over of Holyroodhouse to the Roman Catholics. Thus, when the Revolution came in 1688, Scotland was full of discontent.

## XXXII. Ireland under Tudors and Stuarts, 1485-1688

### 1. Ireland under the Tudors

We turn from Scotland to survey the history of Ireland under the Tudors and Stuarts. When Henry VII ascended the English throne in 1485, Ireland was in a deplorably backward condition. Condition of Ireland, 1485. The Renaissance and all the movements connected with it had left Ireland completely untouched. Learning had perished. Religion had no real hold upon the people. The country was covered with forests and bogs which made communication difficult, and roads were almost non-existent; and it is reckoned that of the three-quarters of a



million people inhabiting the land, at least two-thirds led a wild and uncivilized existence. "*The Pale*"—the district where English jurisdiction was actually established—had been gradually reduced till it only included a stretch of country, some thirty miles wide, from Dundalk to Dublin; outside this area Irish customs and the Irish language prevailed, and each Irish chieftain was supreme in his own district. The descendants of the Anglo-Normans who had conquered the country in Henry II's day had become *Hibernis ipsis Hiberniores*—more Irish than the Irish themselves. Of these the chief families were the *Butlers*, under the Earl of Ormonde in the south-east, and the *Fitz-Geralds* or *Geraldines*, under the headship of the Earl of Desmond in Munster, and under that of the Earl of Kildare in Leinster. Of the old Irish families perhaps the most important were the *O'Neills* and the *O'Donnells* in Ulster.

From the accession of Henry VII till the year 1534 there is little to record in Irish history. An Irish bishop, so runs the story, once told Henry VII that all Ireland could not rule the Earl of Kildare. "Then", said the king, "he must be the man to rule all Ireland." At all events, whether the story is true or false, Ireland was governed for the greater part of this period by two successive *earls of Kildare*, though their rule was tempered by occasional intervals of imprisonment in the Tower of London.<sup>1</sup> It was during one of these periods when the Earl of Kildare was under suspicion of treason that *Sir Edward Poynings* was sent out to Ireland as "Lord Deputy". Poynings managed to get two laws passed in the Irish Parliament which made that Parliament completely dependent upon England; for no Parliament was in future to be summoned without the consent of the king and his Privy Council—the King in Council, as it was called—nor could it discuss any bills without the consent of the same authority (1494).

The rule of  
the Earls  
of Kildare,  
1485-1534.

With the year 1534, Henry VIII began to take a more active part in the affairs of Ireland. The Earl of Kildare, of whose government complaints had been made, was summoned

<sup>1</sup> The first of these two earls, called "the Great Earl", ruled the country for nearly thirty years before his death in 1513. He was a person of remarkable gifts; moreover, he collected an excellent library of Latin, English, French, and Irish books, and his praises were sung by the great Italian poet of the day, Ariosto.



to England, and, his answers not being considered satisfactory, he was put, not for the first time, into the Tower. His son, called "Silken Thomas" from the silken fringe on his helmet, who had heard that his father had been executed and that his family were to be exterminated, rose in rebellion. But the great stronghold of the Geraldines in Leinster, the Castle of *Maynooth*, was taken by the new English lord deputy, and the army which Silken Thomas—now Earl of Kildare, as his father had died in the Tower—was bringing to its relief "melted away like a snow-drift" on the news of its capture. Finally Thomas surrendered himself to the king's mercy and was sent to England, and, some months later, he and his five uncles, three of whom had been treacherously seized at a dinner party to which they had been invited, suffered the penalties of treason at Tyburn. So fell the great house of Kildare.<sup>1</sup>

The remainder of Henry VIII's reign saw a steady development of the king's power; and for the future, English lord deputies were appointed. The Irish Parliament Changes in Ireland, 1535-47. recognized Henry as King of Ireland. Religious changes similar to those in England were made: the Papacy was repudiated and Henry declared "Head of the Irish Church"; the monasteries were dissolved and some of the images in the churches destroyed. Towards the Irish chieftains Henry pursued a policy of "sober ways, politic shifts, and amiable persuasions lest by extreme demands they should revolt to their former beastliness". He made arrangements with many of them by which, in return for acknowledging his sovereignty in Church and State, and surrendering the land of the tribes to him, they received English titles and the gift of some monastic lands, besides the re-grant to themselves and their heirs of the lands of their tribe. Henry's policy was successful during his lifetime, and it was said, just before his death, "that there lives not any in Ireland, even were he of the age of Nestor, who ever saw his country in a more peaceable state".

Moreover, in the reigns of Henry's successors there was little

<sup>1</sup> Of the male branch of the family only one child—the brother of "Silken Thomas"—survived; but he was taken by his aunt to a place of safety in the wilds of Ireland, and eventually escaped to France. After fighting on behalf of the Knights of Rhodes against the Moors, he returned to Ireland, and was given back the Kildare lands in Mary's reign.



trouble. The advisers of Edward VI met with little opposition in making further changes in a Protestant direction, whilst the lord deputy had no difficulty in persuading the Irish Parliament to restore the authority of the Pope in Mary's reign and to repudiate it again on the accession of Elizabeth.

The reign of Elizabeth, however, was one long catalogue of rebellions. In the early years of her reign occurred the rising of *Shane O'Neill*. He claimed the headship of the O'Neill tribe and the earldom of Tyrone, <sup>Shane O'Neill's Rebellion.</sup> bestowed on Shane's father by Henry VIII. There was a rival claimant whom the British Government at first supported, but eventually, after many changes, Elizabeth recognized Shane's rights.<sup>1</sup> But Shane had large ambitions. He wished to become supreme in Ulster; he had a large army at his disposal; and he intrigued with Mary, Queen of Scots, and with Charles IX, the King of France. Finally, the English Government proclaimed him a traitor. Shane was defeated and then killed, and his head, "pickled in a pipkin", was sent to the English lord deputy (1567).

But meanwhile came a great religious revival in Ireland. Outside "the Pale" little or no attempt had been made to enforce Protestantism. It is true in the course of Elizabeth's reign a law was passed forbidding the <sup>Revival of Catholicism.</sup> exercise of any religious worship except the Anglican, but it was impossible to enforce such an act against a whole nation, and the Irish Roman Catholics practically possessed liberty of worship. The reign of Elizabeth was contemporaneous with the great movement known as the Counter-Reformation, when the Roman Catholics recovered much ground that they had previously lost. Nowhere did the movement meet with more striking success than in Ireland. Soon after the accession of Elizabeth, Jesuit priests came over and obtained enormous influence, and on Elizabeth's excommunication in 1570 the Pope was regarded as the temporal ruler of Ireland. Moreover, there were expectations of assistance from Philip II of Spain.

<sup>1</sup> Shane came over himself to England to Elizabeth's Court attended by bareheaded followers in saffron-coloured shirts and rough friezes, who made an immense sensation in London.



Hence, as a consequence, there were two rebellions headed by that branch of the FitzGerald who lived in Munster. The first was unimportant, but the second, which broke out in 1579, led to a great and general rising under the *Earl of Desmond*. The rebels met with some success, and a Spanish and Italian force landed and occupied *Smérwick*.<sup>1</sup> But the foreigners very quickly surrendered and were all—to the number of six hundred—put to the sword as pirates because they could produce no mandate from Philip II. Finally, after a campaign of four years, Munster was quelled. The war had been one of the most appalling ferocity; no Irish soldier was promised quarter, it was said, unless he brought the head of another Irishman with him; Munster had been converted into a desert, and in the last six months of the war it was calculated that no less than thirty thousand people had died of starvation.<sup>2</sup> It was then determined to “plant” Munster with English colonists. Such an idea was not new—in Mary’s reign arrangements had been made to “plant” part of the counties known up till 1921 as “King’s County” and “Queen’s County”, arrangements carried out on Elizabeth’s accession. But now it was to be done on a gigantic scale; nearly half a million acres were distributed to “undertakers” who undertook to introduce English settlers—an agreement which in many cases, however, was not carried out.<sup>3</sup>

The last and most formidable rebellion of all had its centre in the north of Ireland. Its leaders were *Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone*, and *Hugh Roe*, the head of the *O'Donnells*. Tyrone won a victory at the “Yellow Ford” on the Blackwater in 1598. Had he shown more enterprise he

*Tyrone's  
Rebellion,  
1595-1603.*

<sup>1</sup> A nuncio from the Pope, Dr. Nicholas Sandars, also arrived with them, and showed great activity in directing the rebellion. He baffled all attempts at capture, but finally died of exposure and cold, his body being found in a wood “with his Breviary and his Bible under his arm”.

<sup>2</sup> The poet Spenser’s description of the condition of the people after the rebellion is well known: “Out of every corner of woods and glens they came creeping forth, for their legs would not bear them; they looked like anatomies of death, they spake like ghosts crying out of their graves, and a most populous and plentiful country was suddenly left void of man and beast.”

<sup>3</sup> Amongst the “undertakers” were Sir Walter Raleigh and the poet Spenser. It was in Ireland that Spenser wrote a great part of the *Faerie Queene*. When Raleigh was his guest, Spenser showed him the first three books. Raleigh was delighted with them, and they came over to London together in 1589 to see about their publication.



might have succeeded in taking Dublin. As it was, his victory led to a fresh rising in Munster. Moreover, the Spaniards made an alliance with him and sent him arms and money; and the Pope presented him with a "peacock's feather" and promised indulgence to all who would rise in defence of the Church. The situation looked serious—never before had there been a rebellion which had united so many tribes in Ireland, or which partook more of a national rising. *Essex*, Elizabeth's favourite, was sent over in 1599, but he made a truce with Tyrone instead of fighting him, and then returned home. His successor, Lord *Mountjoy*, found, on his arrival in 1600, the rebels in control of all Ireland up to the walls of Dublin. But he was a man of great capacity. He compelled a Spanish force which had landed at Kinsale to surrender. Then, turning against Tyrone, he carried on a war rather, it has been said, "with the spade than the sword". He built forts at all the chief passes to stop communications, and by systematically ravaging each district starved it out. His methods were successful; and in 1603, just before the news of Elizabeth's death reached Ireland, Tyrone submitted on promise that his title and his lands should be restored to him.

At Elizabeth's death the conquest of Ireland was for the first time complete. Yet it had been carried out with excessive brutality, and Elizabeth was told, at the end of her life, that she reigned but over "ashes and dead carcasses". We read of an English deputy attempting to send to Shane O'Neill a present of poisoned wine; of children in Desmond's rebellion being hoisted by the English soldiers on the point of their spears and whirled about in their agony; of Irish women so reduced by starvation during Mountjoy's campaign that they lit fires to attract children, whom they then seized and devoured. No doubt the brutalities were by no means confined to the English side. Moreover, the Irish were regarded, in Spenser's words, as "a savage nation", and they were in league with the two mortal foes of the English—the Pope and the King of Spain; and their chiefs were often very unreliable and treacherous in their dealings with the English lord deputy. Yet, making allowance for all these facts, it is difficult to excuse much that was done, and the Irish Protes-

Horrors of  
Irish warfare.



tants were to pay dearly in 1641 for the evil deeds perpetrated during the reign of the great queen.

## 2. Ireland under the Stuarts

Soon after James I came to the throne, an opportunity arose of developing the system of "plantation" begun in the reign of Elizabeth. In 1607 the *Earls of Tyrone and Tyrconnel*, the heads of the two great Irish tribes in *Ulster*, fearing that they were about to be attainted for treason, fled from the country. The Government then proceeded to confiscate the lands of these two clans. It held that the lands belonged to the two earls, the heads of the tribes; but, by Irish theory and custom, these lands belonged to the tribe, and it is difficult to justify the course pursued by the English Government. Some of the lands—the worst part of them—were restored to the Irish; but over half a million acres were given to settlers from England and Scotland and to the City of London and its twelve City Companies. Nor was Ulster the only province affected. Adventurers flocked over to Ireland, inquired into the titles of land in various districts, and, where they were non-existent or defective, obtained the grant of them from the Government.

The next important stage in the history of Ireland is marked by the *rule of Strafford (1633-40)*. In many ways his government was admirable. He made the officials attend to their business, and endeavoured, with some success, to put a stop to jobbery. He found an army half-clothed and half-armed, undrilled and unpaid; he transformed it into an efficient fighting force well disciplined, well officered, and well paid. The Irish Sea, before his rule, was full of pirates; but under Strafford piracy was sternly and successfully repressed.<sup>1</sup> To his initiative was due the development of the flax industry in Ireland with money which he himself subscribed. He improved the Protestant Church; restored order to the Services; and encouraged clergymen of ability in England to come over and

<sup>1</sup> Strafford himself experienced the inconveniences of piracy, for a pirate ship, the *Pick-pocket*, of Dover, captured linen belonging to him worth £500.



take benefices in Ireland.<sup>1</sup> Finally he summoned the Irish Parliament, and made it pass some excellent laws.

Strafford's rule was then, for many things, worthy of great



commendation. But his conduct was, in other ways, of an exceedingly arbitrary character, and his treatment of individuals

<sup>1</sup> The condition of the Protestant Church in Ireland had been deplorable. A few years before Strafford came to Ireland the Archbishop of Cashel had held, besides his archbishopric, three bishoprics and seventy-seven livings. Strafford found on his arrival that the Earl of Cork had appropriated the revenues of a bishopric worth £1000 a year for a rent of £20. The earl, however, did not keep them for long when Strafford heard of it, and had to disgorge.



was often very high-handed. It is, however, in his proceedings with regard to *Connaught* that he showed himself at his worst. He wished to "plant" that province, as Ulster had been "planted" a few years earlier. With this object he caused an inquiry to be made into the titles of the landholders, and intimidated and browbeat the juries into giving verdicts which would justify him in confiscating the lands. Before, however, he could bring over settlers the condition of affairs in England led him, as we have seen, in 1640 to leave Ireland.

Few will deny that Strafford's masterful energy had been of great service to the country; but his lack of sympathy with Irish hopes, his contempt and disregard for Irish customs and Irish sentiments, caused his rule to be regarded with a hatred which was almost universal. In Strafford's view the people ought not "to feed themselves with the vain flatteries of imaginary liberty"; their duty was merely "to attend upon the king's will with assurance in his parental affections". But in Ireland, as well as in England, the time for such sentiments was past. People no longer wished to be governed for their own good—they preferred to run the risk of misgoverning themselves.

Five months after Strafford's execution *the Irish Rebellion* broke out (*October, 1641*). That the Irish should have risen is not surprising. They had the memory of past injustice to stimulate them. The suppression of the Irish race in Elizabeth's reign had been carried out, it has been said, with a ferocity that was hardly exceeded by any page in the bloodstained annals of the Turks; whilst the confiscations of their land in Ulster during James I's reign, and the threatened confiscations in Connaught under Strafford, had appeared to the Irish to be monstrously unjust. But besides the memory of the past they had the fear of the future. The Scottish Covenanters and the Puritan majority in the Long Parliament now threatened to be supreme; and it was believed, not altogether without ground, that they would root out the Roman Catholic religion from Ireland.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It was reported in Ireland that a member of the Long Parliament had said that the conversion of the Irish Papists could only be effected with the Bible in one hand and the sword in the other, whilst Pym had prophesied that Parliament would not leave one priest in Ireland.



The rebellion broke out on the night of October 22, 1641, and for ten and a half years Ireland was to suffer from almost incessant warfare. The centre of the rebellion was at first Ulster, where the English and Scots were driven from their homes and endured the most fearful hardships, and from Ulster it spread to Wicklow. In a rebellion at such a period some massacres were perhaps inevitable; and modern historians estimate that about four thousand Protestants were killed and that double this number died of famine or exposure. These figures are horrible enough, but to the Puritan imagination in England the number of victims was far greater, and by some people was put at one hundred thousand, and by others even as high as three hundred thousand.<sup>1</sup> It was natural, therefore, that the Long Parliament should pass, in angry vengeance, two laws against the Irish Catholics, the one declaring that no toleration should be granted to the Catholic religion in Ireland, and the other confiscating two and a half million acres of land in that country for the benefit of those who subscribed towards the suppression of the rebellion. The chief result of such laws, again, was to embitter feeling in Ireland, and led to many Catholic gentlemen joining in the rising.

In 1642 the situation was complicated by the outbreak of the Civil War in England, and affairs in Ireland became so entangled, owing to the variety of parties, that a brief summary is hardly possible. It is sufficient to say that Charles, in the course of the Civil War, made attempts to secure aid from the Irish, and that a few did come over; but otherwise nothing definite was done. Then, in 1649, when Charles was executed, all parties in Ireland combined, for a brief period, in order to secure the recognition of his son as king, as the prospect of rule by the "Rump" Parliament was detested by all alike.

Consequently Cromwell was sent over to subdue Ireland. But before he arrived a Colonel Jones had defeated the combined army at *Rathmines*, and the Irish, till they could gather fresh forces, had to rely on their ability to hold out in their fortresses. Cromwell, however, quickly

*Cromwell  
in Ireland,  
1649-50.*

<sup>1</sup> This number is a third more than the total estimated Protestant population in Ireland. (c 271)



stormed *Drogheda* and *Wexford*,<sup>1</sup> and before he left Ireland had obtained possession of the whole coast except Waterford. The conquest which Cromwell had begun his son-in-law, Ireton, completed, and by April, 1652, the whole of Ireland was subdued.

The condition of Ireland at the end of this long period of warfare was pitiable. Over one-third of the population, it is estimated, died during these ten years of bloodshed and misery. Much of the land was out of cultivation, and a great deal of country depopulated. The inhabitants were further reduced, as thousands of Irishmen went to serve in foreign armies, and some hundreds of boys and girls were shipped to Barbados and sold to the planters.

The war was followed by fresh plantations. Enormous quantities of land were distributed to Cromwell's soldiers and other Protestant settlers, whilst some of the previous land-holders were given compensation in Connaught. At the same time the exercise of the Catholic religion was rigidly suppressed. But, in Ireland as in Scotland, Cromwell's rule had some merits, and on the whole fair order was maintained.<sup>2</sup> Above all, Ireland enjoyed the benefits of free trade with England.

The Restoration in 1660 brought to Ireland the same difficulty over the land question as had occurred in England—what was to happen to the Cromwellian settlers? Ireland under Charles II. Eventually it was settled in this way: those land-holders who could prove that they had no share in the rebellion of 1641 recovered their lands, whilst the Cromwellian holders of them received compensation elsewhere. But the arrangements

<sup>1</sup> Cromwell put the whole garrison to death at Drogheda; "I do not think thirty of the whole number escaped with their lives," he wrote. By the rules of war at that time the garrison of a place which had refused to surrender and was then stormed was liable to this fate. Cromwell, however, defended his conduct on the ground that the garrison had been concerned in the massacres of 1641 and that severity on this occasion would lead other garrisons to surrender at once. It may be doubted whether this severity had this result, and, as a matter of fact, no member of the garrison had been concerned in the previous massacres. Both at Drogheda and Wexford Cromwell put to death all the priests he could find, by knocking them on the head, as he himself put it.

<sup>2</sup> Measures had to be undertaken for the extermination of two pests—wolves and Tories. The former had increased enormously during the war, and one man was allowed to lease an estate, only 9 miles from Dublin, at a very cheap rate, on condition that he kept a pack of wolfhounds and "a knowing huntsman". Tories were discontented Irish soldiers who had lost their holdings in the Cromwellian settlement, and had retaliated by murdering the new colonists and stealing their cattle. Five pounds was offered for the head of a wolf, and as much as twenty pounds for the head of a really bad Tory.



## Summary of History by Reigns (1689-1760)

In the reign of *William III* (1689-1702) came the "War of the English Succession" against Louis XIV (1689-97), the first of the seven big wars in which Great Britain was engaged between 1689 and 1815; there was fighting in Scotland, Ireland, in the Netherlands, and at sea. The closing years of William's reign saw the attempt to settle the Spanish Succession problem through the Partition Treaties with France; but the death of the King of Spain and the ambitions of Louis XIV led to war in 1702, just before William's death (Ch. XXXIII). Constitutionally, the reign of William III was of considerable importance; the Declaration or Bill of Rights (1689) and the Act of Settlement (1701) limited the powers of the Crown, and, owing to the financial needs of the kingdom, Parliament had to meet every year. William's reign also witnessed the beginnings of some measure of toleration in religion and of liberty with regard to the Press; and the coinage was reformed (Ch. XXXIV). In Scotland the reign, when fighting was over, was one of advance; Presbyterianism was made the established religion, and schools were started in every parish (pp. 457-8). In Ireland, after the conquest by William III, came the severe Penal Laws against the Roman Catholics (p. 575).

The reign of *Anne* (1702-14) saw the second of the great wars against Louis XIV, the war of the Spanish Succession (1702-13), which was famous for Marlborough's great victories; by the Treaty of Utrecht, which ended it, Great Britain not only gained the objects for which she went to war, but kept Gibraltar and Minorca, which she won during the war, and acquired Nova Scotia and Newfoundland (pp. 438-45). In Domestic policy party spirit ran very high between the Whigs and Tories, and the connection between literature and politics was very close, Swift being the chief Tory and Addison the chief Whig writer. Anne's first minister, Godolphin, a Whig, was replaced in 1710 by two Tories, Harley (Earl of Oxford) and St. John (Lord Bolingbroke), who persecuted the Dissenters and made the Treaty of Utrecht; and Bolingbroke, at the close of Anne's reign, was probably scheming for the succession of the Old Pretender (pp. 451-6). But perhaps the most important event of the reign was the Union between England and Scotland in 1707, a Union not obtained without great difficulty, but which proved of inestimable value both to the two countries concerned and to the British Empire (p. 458).

The reign of *George I* (1714-27) began a period of peace which lasted till 1739, a peace only broken by Mar's rebellion of 1715 in



Scotland (p. 483) and a sea fight with the Spanish fleet in 1720 (p. 460). Constitutionally, the reign was of importance because the king ceased to attend the meetings of his ministers, owing to the fact that he could speak no English; at first there was no chief minister, but when Walpole was called to office in 1721 he quickly made his supremacy felt in the Cabinet of Ministers, and he is known in history as our first Prime Minister. Throughout this and the following reign the Whigs, whose leaders were the big landowners, were in office partly owing to their support of the Hanoverian dynasty and partly owing to their supremacy in both Houses of Parliament (Ch. XXXVI). The other chief matters of interest were the Septennial Act and the South Sea Bubble (p. 488); whilst in this and the following reign come some of the best-known writings of Swift and Pope.

The reign of *George II* (1727-60) saw the continuance of peace till 1739 and of Walpole's ministry till 1742 (pp. 490-3). With the closing years of Walpole's ministry, however, a new period of warfare opened. There was a war with Spain in 1739 over trading rights in Spanish America (p. 461). This was followed by the war of the Austrian Succession (1740-8), in which Great Britain upheld the rights of Maria Theresa, whilst Prussia, under Frederick the Great (who reigned from 1740-86) and France opposed them (pp. 461-3); during this war occurred the rising of the "Young Pretender" in Scotland in 1745 (p. 484). Eight years after peace had been made came the great Seven Years War (1756-63), due partly to the rivalry of Prussia and Austria in Germany and partly to the conflicting ambitions of Great Britain and France in India, where Clive by his defence of Arcot in 1751 spoilt the completion of Dupleix's schemes, and in North America, where the French hoped to join their territory in Canada and Louisiana. The war was famous in Europe for the campaigns of Frederick the Great, often against superior forces. So far as Great Britain was concerned, the war began unsuccessfully under the Duke of Newcastle, but it was continued brilliantly under the guidance of William Pitt (later Earl of Chatham), and in 1759 came the great year of victories (pp. 463-77). Apart from the wars, the most important feature perhaps of the reign was the great movement connected with the name of Wesley, whose influence in the religious life of the nation was equal to that exercised in political life by William Pitt (pp. 495-8). The other chief points of interest were the beginning of the inventions and new methods of the "Industrial Revolution" (pp. 584-6), and the alteration in 1751 of the Calendar (p. 494).

In the arrangement of the subjects in the period 1689 to 1760, Ch. XXXIII deals with Foreign policy, and Ch. XXXIV with Domestic affairs (including Scotland) during the reigns of William III and Anne (1689-1714). Ch. XXXV is concerned with Foreign and Imperial affairs, and Ch. XXXVI with Domestic affairs (including a survey of the Constitution, 1714-1832), during the reigns of George I and George II (1714-60). Irish affairs during the period are dealt with in the earlier part of Ch. XLII, and the beginnings of the "Industrial Revolution" in Ch. XLIII, Sec. 1.

For list of chief dates of period see end of volume.



were not satisfactory; a good many innocent Roman Catholics did not, as a matter of fact, recover all their lands, and some recovered none. The general result was this. In 1640 two-thirds of the landholders had been Roman Catholic. After 1665 one-third belonged to the *native* interest, including families of Anglo-Norman descent and mainly Catholic; one-third belonged to the *Irish* interest, i.e. the settlers of Elizabeth's and James I's days or their descendants, mainly Protestant; one-third to the *English* interest, i.e. the Cromwellian settlers.

The reign of Charles II was a period of peace for Ireland. For a great part of the time Ormonde was the ruler, and under him a discreet toleration was exercised, and the country enjoyed repose. In the reign of Charles II, however, Ireland not only lost her free trade with England, but began to suffer from the laws which the influence of jealous English merchants and farmers secured in the English Parliament. But of that we shall have something to say later on.

### XXXIII. A Period of Foreign Wars, 1689-1714

The Revolution of 1688 ushered in a period of prolonged conflict for Great Britain. Between 1688 and 1815 she was engaged in a series of seven great wars, which occupied no less than fifty-six years. Of these wars five begin and the other two end as wars in which Great Britain's chief opponent is France, and we must try to understand the general causes of the hostility between these two countries before examining the particular causes of each war.

First of all, there were the ambitions of France in Europe. France wanted to extend and to strengthen her eastern frontier with the ultimate object of making the River Rhine her boundary.<sup>1</sup> This could only be accomplished at the expense, in the south-east, of the German States and, in the

The conflict with France, 1689-1815.

The Barrier Fortresses.

<sup>1</sup> The Rhine, the frontier of old Gaul, was the great object of French ambition. An old proverb ran—

Quand Paris boira le Rhin  
Toute la Gaule aura sa fin.



north-east, of the Netherlands. The Netherlands were divided. Part of them, called Holland or the United Provinces, was independent: part of them, corresponding to the modern country of Belgium, belonged to the King of Spain up till 1713, when it came under the rule of Austria. The frontier between France and what is now Belgium was no natural boundary, such as a river or a range of mountains, but on each side of it had been built a great chain of forts known as the "Barrier Fortresses". Those on the Belgian side were slowly and steadily passing into the hands of France as she pushed her frontier forward. Once they were all, or nearly all, in her hands, France might be able to seize not only Belgium, but Holland as well. But with the independence of Holland, England's own fortunes were linked. The French, if they obtained outlets in the North Sea, would threaten our maritime position and consequently our national security. For that reason England insisted that the "Barrier Fortresses" should be fortified wholly or in part by soldiers from Holland. "No Holland, no Great Britain," might have been the motto of English statesmen.

The ambitions of France were not only concerned with the acquisition of the Rhine frontier. At various times between 1689 and 1815 her rulers attempted, if not to annex the country, at all events to control the policy of Spain by means of a close family alliance or a treaty. Moreover, Louis XIV (1643-1715) at the beginning, and the French revolutionaries and Napoleon (1793-1815) at the end, of the period had achieved a position in Europe which threatened the independence of all other States.

The causes of this constant warfare between England and France were not, however, solely European. The ambitions of France and of England clashed, as will be shown later, throughout the world. In India and in the West Indies, in North America and in North Africa, a great struggle had to be contested to decide between their competing ideals of expansion. And if contemporary statesmen, with rare exceptions, attached more importance to the European than to the Imperial aspect of the struggle, to us to-day it is the struggle for Empire that must always possess the greater interest.

World  
ambitions.



We must now deal with the wars in detail. And first we will take the two wars that were fought between 1688 and 1713. The position of Louis XIV in 1688 was unique. His army, although it had been engaged in continual wars, had suffered no serious reverse in battle for over forty years, and his navy was equal to those of Holland and England combined. In Louvois the king possessed the best war minister, in Vauban the best engineer, and in Tourville the best admiral of the age; and though Condé and Turenne, his greatest generals, were dead by 1689, he still had Luxembourg and Villars. With such resources at his command, Louis, during his reign, had added to his dominions many of the frontier fortresses in the Netherlands already referred to, and, farther south, Alsace, Franche Comté, and the great fortress of Strasbourg. He was threatening further annexations at the expense of the Netherlands and of Germany. The English kings, Charles II and James II, had been his pensioners, and he had hopes of securing for his family the succession to the throne of Spain. The Revolution in England, however, ruined the plans of Louis XIV. To a king of England who was dependent upon Louis for money and upon his ambassador for advice succeeded William III, the ruler of Holland, one whose whole life had been devoted to resisting France. William had already in 1688 formed a League against France, and the support of England in 1689 was the coping stone to that alliance. "Without the concurrence of the realm and power of England", said William later, "it was impossible to put a stop to the ambitions and greatness of France."

The position of  
Louis XIV.

The war which followed is known in Continental history as the *War of the League of Augsburg (1689-97)*. To us it is better known as the *War of the English Succession*, for Louis XIV was supporting James II, and therefore its issue decided whether William or James was to be king of England. For the first two years of the war (1689-90) English military operations were confined mainly to the British Isles and to the sea. In Scotland, John Graham of Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee, raised the Highlanders on behalf of James, and routed, in the space of two minutes, just beyond the Pass of *Killiecrankie*, William's forces

The War of  
the English  
Succession.

The war from  
1689-90.



under the leadership of Mackay whilst the latter were trying to fix the lately invented bayonets into the muzzle of their muskets (June, 1689). In the battle, however, Dundee was mortally wounded, and with his death all the energy was taken out of the movement, which quickly subsided.

Meantime, in Ireland, James II arrived with French money and troops. In Ireland the situation was far more serious than in Scotland, for, in addition to the bitter religious feeling, there was the racial hatred between the Irish inhabitants and the English and Scottish settlers. A war between Catholics and Protestants at once broke out. The Protestants in the North were attacked and the two Protestant strongholds, *Londonderry* and *Enniskillen*, besieged. But the Protestants in Londonderry held out heroically for one hundred and five days till they were relieved, whilst those in Enniskillen attacked their besiegers and won the Battle of *Newtown Butler*.

Subsequently William himself came to Ireland, and won a victory at the *River Boyne* (July 1, 1690). The battle was notable for the variety of nations engaged in it. Of James's forces, over a third were French, and the commander-in-chief was a Frenchman. On William's side, about half were natives of England, and, of course, he had many Irish Protestants from the north of Ireland and some two thousand Dutchmen fighting for him; the rest of his force included Huguenots, Prussians, Danes, and Finlanders. William, contrary to the advice of his chief commanders, decided to cross a ford of the river on the other side of which was drawn up the army of James. He might have paid dearly for his rashness; but the French troops had been withdrawn to guard James's left flank, and the Irish infantry, untrained and ill-disciplined, were quickly repulsed, whole regiments in one part of the field flinging away "arms, colours, and cloaks, and scampering off to the hills without striking a blow or firing a shot".<sup>1</sup> Only the bravery of the French troops and the Irish cavalry in the subsequent operations saved the retreat from being a disastrous one. James shortly afterwards fled back to France, and in 1691 the war in Ireland came to an end. John Churchill,

<sup>1</sup> See the description in Macaulay's *History*.



the future Duke of Marlborough, had a brilliant campaign, and took Cork and Kinsale, whilst Ginckel, a Dutch general, won a desperate battle for William at *Aughrim*. A few months later *Limerick*, the last great Catholic fortress, surrendered, and with its capitulation William's position in Ireland was secure.

On the sea, in these two years, Louis XIV missed his chances. With a superior fleet, and with the best admiral of the day in Tourville,<sup>1</sup> he should, according to military historians, have isolated Ireland from England so as to give On the Sea. every assistance to James; instead of which William was allowed to pass over to Ireland unmolested, and his communications were never threatened even for an hour. Tourville, however, on June 30, 1690, the day before the Battle of the Boyne, met at *Beachy Head* a combined Dutch and English fleet under Lord Torrington. The latter, who was inferior in force, wished to refuse battle with his van and centre and to fight only a rearguard action.<sup>2</sup> But the impetuous Dutch van insisted on fighting, and were very severely handled; and had Tourville followed up his victory, the result might have been disastrous.

During the rest of the war (1691-7) England obtained the supremacy at sea. In 1692 came the victory off *La Hogue*. Tourville, on this occasion vastly inferior in force, The war from 1691-7. had fought with credit a rearguard action against the English admiral, Russell. But, after the battle, the French fleet had to retire in some disorder, and many ships retreated through the dangerous "Race of Alderney", which is between that island and the mainland. Thirteen of the French ships, however, were unable to get through, took On the Sea. refuge at La Hogue, and were burnt by Russell's fleet. That victory, received in England with tremendous and perhaps exaggerated enthusiasm, saved England from fear of invasion, and

<sup>1</sup> Tourville had served in the French fleet for thirty years, and had seen service in the Anglo-Dutch wars and against the Barbary pirates. He was a practical seaman as well as a good tactician; indeed it was a saying at the time that he could act in any capacity from a ship's carpenter to an admiral.

<sup>2</sup> The Government had information that the enemy's ships-of-the-line numbered only sixty, and ordered Torrington with his fifty ships to engage them. Torrington counted with his own eyes—or rather with his one eye, as he had lost the other in an explosion—eighty ships of the enemy, and was unwilling to fight, but he had to obey orders.



gave to her the command of the Channel.<sup>1</sup> The French, however, then took to commerce-destroying and did considerable damage, especially when they captured one hundred out of four hundred ships of a convoy bound for Smyrna. In 1694 an interesting event occurred. William sent a fleet to the Mediterranean, where it saved Barcelona from capture and consequently Spain from French control, and by wintering at Cadiz and returning to the Mediterranean in the next year exerted considerable influence upon the course of the war.

On land during these years (1691-7) the English operations are confined to the Spanish Netherlands. The war was chiefly a war of sieges. William as a soldier was painstaking but mediocre; his opponent, Luxembourg, was brilliant but indolent. Consequently William generally lost the battles; but Luxembourg took no advantage of his victories. William's designs were excellent. Thus he tried to surprise Luxembourg at *Steinkirk* in 1692; but he wasted time by a preliminary cannonade of artillery which lasted one hour and a half, and by an elaborate deployment of infantry which was already late in arriving. Luxembourg, though genuinely surprised, marshalled his troops with great rapidity and won a victory. In the next year (1693) William was beaten at *Neerwinden*. But by sheer tenacity and strength of purpose he clung on, and two years later he won his first great success by recapturing the strong fortress of Namur.

Finally, by 1697, France was exhausted, and at the *Treaty of Ryswick* she recognized William as King of England, and gave up all her conquests since 1678 except Strasbourg. The war had been an uninteresting one. The English had, however, done well. They had secured the supremacy at sea. They had learnt some valuable lessons under William's leadership, lessons whose effect was to be shown in the subsequent wars under Marlborough. They had secured an honourable treaty, and, above all, had helped to inflict the first decided check on the ambitions of Louis XIV.

<sup>1</sup> "During several days", says Macaulay, "the bells of London pealed without ceasing. Flags were flying on all the steeples. Rows of candles were in all the windows. Bonfires were at all the corners of the streets. And three Lords took down with them £37,000 in coin to distribute among the sailors."



We turn now to the causes of the next war—the *War of the Spanish Succession*. That two monarchs should arrange for the distribution of the territories belonging to a third monarch in anticipation of his death and without consulting either him or his ministers seems an indefensible proceeding. Yet this is what happened in 1698. The circumstances were, it is true, peculiar. The Spanish dominions included not only Spain, but the Spanish Netherlands, Milan and Naples, Sicily and Sardinia, besides vast possessions in the West Indies and South America. Charles II, the King of Spain, had no children or brothers, but he had two sisters and two aunts. Of the two aunts, the elder had married the French king, and the younger the emperor. They were all dead, but their respective sons, Louis XIV and the Emperor Leopold, had married, the one the elder and the other the younger of the two sisters of the Spanish king.<sup>1</sup> Here was a difficult situation. It was quite obvious that neither Louis XIV nor Leopold nor their eldest sons could be allowed to add the enormous territories of Spain to those either of France or Austria. It was hopeless to deal with Charles II, who was sickly and half-witted, and consequently Louis XIV and William III proceeded to draw up Partition Treaties by which a baby, the grandson of Leopold and the heir to the Electorate of Bavaria, was to succeed to the greater part of the Spanish dominions (1698).

The Spanish Succession and the Partition Treaties, 1698-1702.

Unfortunately the Bavarian baby died of smallpox. Another treaty was accordingly drawn up (1700), under which the Archduke Charles, the *second* son of the emperor, was to obtain the bulk of the Spanish inheritance, but the Dauphin of France was to have Naples and Milan.<sup>2</sup> It is hardly a matter for surprise that the King of Spain, when he heard of these Partition Treaties, flew into a violent passion, and that his queen smashed some of the furniture in her room. The King of Spain subsequently sickened, and on his deathbed was persuaded to leave all his possessions to Philip, the *second* son of the Dauphin (1700). Louis XIV, after some hesitation, accepted the will and threw over the treaty. Philip was therefore declared King of Spain. A Bourbon had displaced a Habsburg, and Louis XIV might well have said—as

<sup>1</sup> See table on p. 329.

<sup>2</sup> Milan was to be exchanged for Lorraine.



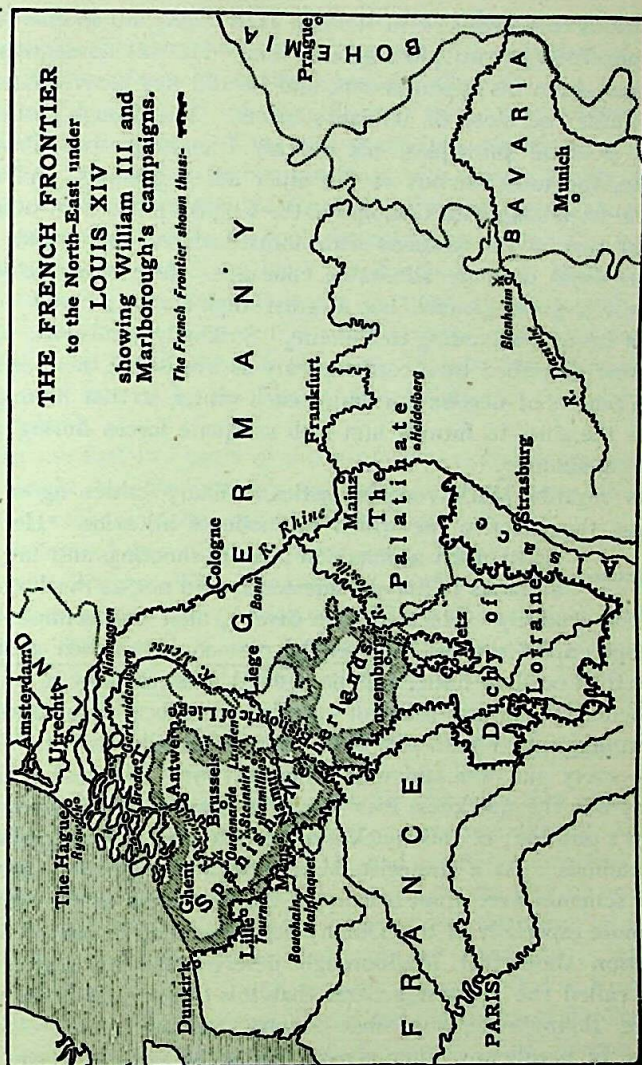
he is wrongly reported to have said—"Henceforth there are no Pyrenees".

Louis XIV's acceptance of the will would not, in itself, however, have produced the war, for, after all, it was his second and not his eldest grandson that succeeded. Other actions of the French king made war inevitable. In the first place, he expelled the Dutch from the Barrier Fortresses, which they garrisoned, and substituted French troops, and thus showed his intention of making a further advance in the Netherlands. Secondly, he expressly reserved the rights of Philip to the French throne. Philip's elder brother was delicate and not expected to live long, and Philip might therefore succeed not only to Spain but to France as well. Thirdly, he showed by his policy that he was attempting to secure for France the commercial concessions which England had obtained for trade with Spanish America. Finally, on James II's death, in 1701, he recognized James's son—the "Old Pretender" as he is called—as James III, King of England. For Louis XIV, after recognizing William's title at the Peace of Ryswick, to support the Pretender four years later, was the one thing needed to make England as enthusiastic as William for renewed war. The war, therefore, broke out in 1702, but William died before he could take any part in the fighting.

To summarize a war which lasted for over ten years, and which was fought in Italy and Germany, in the Netherlands, and in Spain, is no easy task. At the opening of the war, England, Holland, Austria, and most of the German States were on one side, and they were joined later by Portugal and Savoy; on the other side were France, Spain, and Bavaria. The great figure in the war, so far as the Allies were concerned, was *John Churchill*, created *Duke of Marlborough*. Born in 1650, he had seen service in Holland as a colonel in the French service during Charles II's reign,<sup>1</sup> had subsequently by his coolness saved the situation at Sedgemoor in that of James II, and had undertaken some very

<sup>1</sup> Turenne, the French general, is said to have called him "the handsome Englishman", and to have won a bet that Churchill would recover a post with half the number of men who had failed to defend it.





successful operations in the south of Ireland under William III. No one can deny either his avarice or his faithlessness. He deserted James II twice. He betrayed, it is said, the secret of two







in possession of the Spanish Netherlands. Marlborough's earlier campaigns, therefore—with the exception of the greatest of them all, that of Blenheim (1704)—had for their ob-  
Marlborough's objects.  
 jective the expulsion of the French from the Spanish Netherlands. The later campaigns aimed at the conquest of the French barrier fortresses with a view, finally, to an advance into the interior of France, but the story will show that he was recalled before he could complete his task. The history of the campaigns will be more intelligible if it is realized that the rivers in the Netherlands run in three curves roughly parallel with one another. The outside curve is formed by the Moselle and the Rhine, into which the Moselle falls; then comes the curve formed by the Meuse, and, inside that, the curve of the Scheldt.

In the first two years of the war (1702-3) no big engagement was fought, but Marlborough succeeded in taking some fortresses and in weakening the position of the French in  
The war, 1702-3.  
 the valleys of two of these rivers—the Meuse

and the Rhine. With 1704 came the first of Marlborough's great campaigns. The position of the Allies was extremely critical. Vienna, the capital of the Austrian dominions, was threatened not only by Hungarian rebels on the east, but by French and Bavarian armies on the west. Marlborough planned a great march from the Netherlands to save Vienna.

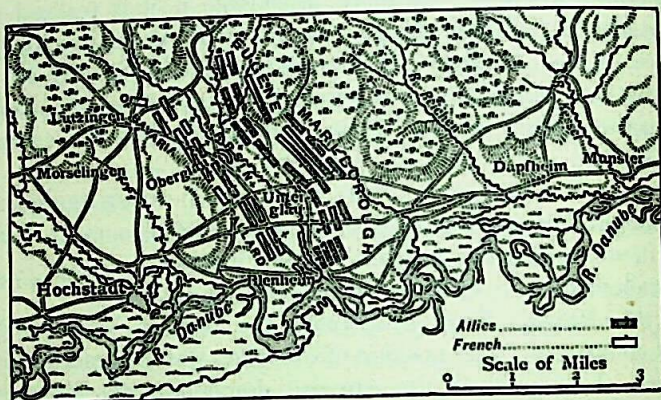
Blenheim, 1704.  
 But his task was complicated. He had to hood-  
 wink the Dutch as to his intentions, for otherwise they would not let him go. He had to make a flank march over difficult country right across the French front. He had to effect a junction with Eugene whilst preventing the junction of all the French armies. And, finally, he had, in order to cross the Danube, to storm a strongly fortified position held by the Bavarians. But he accomplished all these things, and his army and that of Eugene's succeeded in getting between Vienna and the armies of the French.

Then followed the *battle of Blenheim*. The French and Bavarians held a strong position behind the River Nebel. Marlborough first sent Lord Cutts<sup>1</sup> to storm the village of Blenheim

<sup>1</sup> Cutts's bravery was famous, and at the siege of Namur in 1695 his coolness in the hottest fire of the French batteries won for him the nickname of "Salamander".



on the French right. But it was strongly held, and Cutts, received at thirty yards with a murderous fire, was repulsed. Meantime Marlborough, seeing the weakness of the French centre, which was held only by cavalry, and finding the marshes which protected the French front passable, began to cross the river with the intention of making his main attack on the centre, whilst Cutts kept up a feint attack on Blenheim, and Eugene attacked the left wing. Marlborough's attack was entirely suc-



Blenheim, Aug. 13th, 1704

cessful; the French centre was pierced, and their right wing then enveloped. By the end of the day Marlborough had one of the two chief French generals in his own coach, and had captured one hundred guns and some eleven thousand prisoners. The Blenheim campaign marks an epoch in history. It saved Vienna; it preserved Germany from a French occupation; it destroyed the impression of French invincibility on land; and it re-established our military prestige, a prestige which had been at times sadly tarnished since the days of Agincourt.

Yet the Blenheim campaign did not exhaust Marlborough's schemes for that year. Marlborough, like William, had realized the importance of the Mediterranean, and had planned a great attack on Toulon by land under the Duke of Savoy and by sea with the English fleet. Unfortunately the Duke of Savoy was unable to make the attack. Our fleet, however, under Rooke,



took *Gibraltar*—not, as it turned out, a matter of much difficulty—and fought a battle off Malaga which, though indecisive, led the French fleet to desist from challenging our position in the Mediterranean.

The next important year is 1706. First, the French were evicted from Italy in consequence of a great battle won by Eugene near Turin. Then, in the Netherlands, Marlborough won the battle of *Ramillies*. He was threatening the strong fortress of Namur, and the French general had concentrated his forces to protect it. In the battle which ensued Marlborough saw that his troops could move from one flank to another more quickly than the French, as they had the shorter distance to traverse, and there were no marshes to hinder them. Accordingly, he made an attack on one flank, and then, leaving the conspicuous red-coated British on a hill to keep the enemy occupied on that flank, he transferred the more sober-hued Allies behind some hills to the other wing, and won a victory which he followed up with such rapidity, that by the end of the year the French had lost<sup>2</sup> not only Antwerp and Brussels, but nearly the whole of the Spanish Netherlands.

Battle of  
 Ramillies,  
 1706.

The third success of the Allies in 1706 was won in Spain. Two years previously the Allies had determined to attempt to put the Archduke Charles on the Spanish throne. At first not much was done, but in 1705 Peterborough captured *Barcelona*<sup>1</sup> by a brilliant feat of arms, and occupied Catalonia and Valencia. In 1706 the Allies under Galway marched from Portugal and occupied Madrid, whilst Peterborough and his army marched from the east and effected a junction. Later in the year, however, Madrid had to be evacuated, and the joint army retreated to Valencia. But the year had been so disastrous to Louis XIV, that he offered terms of peace that the Allies would have done well to accept.

The war in  
 Spain, 1705-6.

The year 1707 was a set back to the Allies, as Eugene failed

<sup>1</sup> The evidence for this and other achievements of Peterborough depends upon the *Memoirs* of Captain Carleton, memoirs which were for long accepted as genuine by historians, and which were edited in 1809 by Sir Walter Scott. It has recently been proved, however, that these memoirs are fictitious, and that they were written probably either by Defoe or Swift, and there is good reason for thinking that the credit for the capture of Barcelona really belongs to Peterborough's subordinate officers.



in an attempt to invade France, Marlborough could do nothing in the Netherlands, and in Spain Galway was severely defeated at *Almanza* owing to the flight of the Portuguese contingent, which left the English to contend against a force three times their number. In the following year (1708), however, Marlborough won another great victory at *Oudenarde*, which led to the practical completion of the capture of the Spanish Netherlands and also to the capture of Lille, one of the most important of the French barrier fortresses. Moreover, the English captured *Minorca*, and by so doing secured what was most important—a harbour in the Mediterranean in which a fleet could winter; whilst stormy weather led to the failure of a French expedition which was sent up the Firth of Forth to capture Edinburgh. Louis again offered peace, and was prepared to preserve for Philip only Naples and Sicily. The Allies insisted that he should also, if necessary, assist them in expelling Philip from Spain by force. Such a proposal naturally not only infuriated the French king, but the French nation as well, and gave them both fresh energy for the war. And then, in 1709, came the last and the most costly of Marlborough's victories, *Malplaquet*, and the capture of Mons.

Our great series of successes ended with Malplaquet. French enthusiasm revived. The Allies became slack, and a Tory Ministry in favour of peace succeeded to power in Great Britain. This Ministry dismissed Marlborough in 1711, and Ormonde, his successor, was given instructions—which he was to keep secret from the Allies—not to undertake offensive operations.<sup>1</sup> In Spain the Allies, though they managed temporarily to occupy Madrid, were defeated in two battles in 1710; and the accession in the following year of the Archduke Charles to the Austrian dominions, and his election as Emperor, altered the whole situation.

<sup>1</sup> This was perhaps the most dishonourable action ever done by a British Government. Ormonde, in obedience to instructions from home, finally withdrew his forces altogether, though there was a brilliant opportunity of defeating the French. "Then the British camp", wrote a contemporary, "resounded with curses against the Duke of Ormonde as a stupid tool and general of straw. The colonels, captains, and other brave officers were so overwhelmed with vexation that they sat apart in their tents, looking on the ground for very shame with downcast eyes, and for several days shrank from the sight even of their fellow soldiers."



Now that, in 1711, the Archduke Charles had succeeded to all the Austrian dominions, it was absurd for Great Britain to go on fighting in order that he might succeed to the Spanish dominions as well. But the difficulty was that our allies, the Dutch and the Austrians, would not agree to a peace. What then was Bolingbroke, the joint head of the Government, to do? He had already begun to open up negotiations with France behind the back of the Allies, and these were now continued.

The Treaty of Utrecht, 1713.

Eventually in 1713 a series of treaties was signed at *Utrecht*.<sup>1</sup> By these treaties Philip kept Spain and the New World, but was excluded from the succession to the French throne. The Emperor Charles was given the Spanish dominions in Italy and the Netherlands. The Dutch were allowed to garrison the Barrier Fortresses. With regard to Great Britain, the Protestant succession was recognized. She obtained from France Newfoundland (leaving to the French certain fishing rights which were the cause, later, of many difficulties) and Nova Scotia, and from Spain Gibraltar and Minorca, thereby establishing her position in that sea which has been called the "keyboard" of Europe. Spain also gave to Great Britain the monopoly of the slave trade with Spanish America—not then regarded as either inhuman or wicked—and the right to send one ship a year to Porto Bello in the Spanish Main.

Great Britain had therefore gained her original objects in going to war. She had made, moreover, very important additions to her Empire; and there is some truth, if also some exaggeration, in the verdict of an historian that if at the Armada England entered the race for colonial expansion, she won it at the Treaty of Utrecht. Moreover, the peace, though it checked French ambitions, was not a vindictive one against France, and therefore that country did not, after it, harbour the desire for a future "war of revenge". Englishmen must remember, however, to their shame that the people of Catalonia, who had fought stanchly and bravely for the Allies throughout the war, were left to the vengeance of Philip—and a terrible vengeance it proved to be.

<sup>1</sup> Treaties were signed between France, Spain, Holland, and England at Utrecht in 1713, but the treaty between France and Austria was made in the following year at Rastadt.



## XXXIV. Domestic Affairs, 1689-1714

## 1. England

Before proceeding with our review of foreign policy, we must turn to affairs at home, for in our domestic as well as in our foreign policy the Revolution of 1688 is very important. The great result of the Revolution upon our system of government was that henceforth the bulk of the king's revenue was obtained by *annual* grants from Parliament, and that Parliament had therefore to meet every year. As a consequence, Parliament acquired the complete control of finance, and, with that, an increasing control of the administration. Gradually, also, the relation between the two Houses of Parliament underwent alteration. The House of Commons has had, since 1407, the sole power to initiate Bills involving the grant of public money or the imposition of taxation, and in the reign of Charles II it denied the right of the House of Lords to amend such Bills. Consequently, with the increasing control of Parliament in financial affairs, the Lower House became the more important; though, as we shall see, individual members of the Upper House could, up till 1832, largely influence the composition of the House of Commons.

Moreover, as the result of the Revolution, two Acts were passed, the one at the beginning of William and Mary's and the other at the end of William's reign, which limited the power of the Crown. The *Declaration of Bill of Rights*, which was drawn up and passed through Parliament in 1689, completed the work which Magna Carta had begun. Its clauses may be briefly summarized. First, William and Mary were declared to be king and queen, and the succession to the throne was settled upon their children, and, failing them, upon James's other daughter, Anne; and a clause was added that no person who was a Roman Catholic or who married a Roman Catholic could succeed to the throne.<sup>1</sup> Secondly, it

<sup>1</sup> It has been calculated that this clause has taken away the eventual claims to the succession of nearly sixty persons.



declared to be illegal: (a) the "pretended power" of the Crown to suspend laws; (b) the power of dispensing with laws "as it hath been exercised of late" by the Crown; (c) the existence of the Court of High Commission and similar courts. Thirdly, Parliament was to be freely elected, to have freedom of speech and to meet frequently, and there was to be no taxation without its consent. Fourthly, a standing army was declared illegal. This clause is still in force, and the army is only made legal by an Act passed every year, called the Army (Annual) Act—and this is another reason why Parliament has to be called annually.

The second measure was the *Act of Settlement*, passed in 1701. The first question to be arranged was that of the succession, for William and Mary were childless and all the children of the Princess Anne had died.<sup>1</sup> The Protestant representative of the House of Stuart who had the best claim was Sophia, the granddaughter of James I (her mother was Elizabeth who married the Elector Palatine) and the wife of the Elector of Hanover. The crown was accordingly settled upon "the most excellent Princess Sophia, and the heirs of her body, being Protestants". With regard to the other clauses in the Act of Settlement, some were inserted because of William's personal unpopularity and because of the jealousy felt with regard to his foreign policy at that time. Thus the monarch was not to leave the kingdom without the consent of Parliament, and England was not to be obliged to engage in wars for the foreign possessions of the Crown. But these articles were soon modified or repealed. Two clauses are, however, of permanent importance. Henceforth judges could only be dismissed after being convicted in the Law Courts, or after an address by both Houses of Parliament—and the king, therefore, lost his power of dismissal which had been so useful in previous reigns. No pardon by the Crown could be pleaded to an impeachment by the House of Commons—a clause which finally established the responsibility of the king's ministers for all acts of state.

Though the Crown still continued to select the ministers, and,

<sup>1</sup> The Duke of Gloucester, the only one to survive infancy, died in 1700 when nearly eleven years of age; eight months before his death he celebrated Queen Elizabeth's birthday in high spirits, "firing all his guns and making great rejoicing".



in William's reign at all events, to control the Home and Foreign politics of the country, the Revolution had secured, therefore, for the individual Englishman his political liberty and for the Parliament which represented him complete control of taxation and, subject to the king's veto, of legislation. In two other respects the Revolution had important effects. Hitherto all publications

had, under an annual *Licensing Act*, been subject to a rigorous censorship.<sup>1</sup> In 1695 the House of

*Liberty of the Press, 1695.*

Commons decided not to renew the Act, and thus was secured the Liberty of the Press for which half a century previously Milton had ardently pleaded—though that liberty was still somewhat curtailed by the severity of the laws of Libel<sup>2</sup> and by heavy stamp duties upon newspapers. Secondly, something was done to make religious restrictions less severe. By the *Toleration Act* (1689),

*The Toleration Act, 1689.*

liberty of worship was allowed to those who could subscribe to thirty-six of the thirty-nine Articles in the Book of Common Prayer, i.e. practically all except Roman Catholics and Unitarians. But the Nonconformists were still excluded from office under the Test and Corporation Acts passed in the reign of Charles II. The Toleration Act marked, nevertheless, a great advance, and from that time the feeling of tolerance steadily increased. After the accession of the House of Hanover in the eighteenth century an Act was annually passed excusing the Nonconformists from the penalties which they had incurred for holding any office. Complete toleration to all sects, including Roman Catholics, was not, however, to come till the nineteenth century.<sup>3</sup>

We must now say something about the details of the domestic history. William and Mary established their position with greater ease than might have been expected. The death of Dundee

<sup>1</sup> In Charles II's reign printing was confined to London, York, and the two Universities, and the number of "master-printers" was only twenty. All new works had to be examined and licensed before they were published.

<sup>2</sup> These libel laws were mitigated by an Act passed in 1792.

<sup>3</sup> Though the Nonconformists obtained toleration, severe laws continued to be passed against the Roman Catholics. Thus in 1699 a law was passed rendering any priest liable to perpetual imprisonment for celebrating Mass; and a friar named Atkinson, who was convicted through the evidence of his serving-maid—she was rewarded with a gift of £100—was imprisoned for thirty years at Hurst Castle, finally dying there in 1729 at the age of seventy-three. But these vindictive laws were not as a rule enforced by the Government, and the Roman Catholics, as a whole, were allowed to have their worship undisturbed.



at the Battle of Killiecrankie (p. 433) and the flight of James to France after the Battle of the Boyne (p. 434) led to the submission of Scotland and Ireland. In England itself there was surprisingly little opposition. One of the Archbishops, four bishops and four hundred other clergymen, known as the Non-jurors, refused to take the oath of allegiance to William and Mary, and consequently were deprived of their benefices—and that was all. Yet, though there was little opposition, there was also little loyalty to the new sovereigns. Statesmen and warriors were alike faithless. Danby, who was the chief minister for five years, Marlborough, the general, and Russell, the victor of the Battle of La Hogue, all intrigued with James whilst holding high office under William and Anne. Parliaments were often unfriendly, and there was one plot against William's life.<sup>1</sup>

Lack of  
loyalty to  
William  
and Mary.

No doubt Englishmen ought to have been grateful for the benefits of the Revolution, but perhaps their want of loyalty to William and Mary is not altogether surprising. The king himself was interested in foreign politics alone. England was to him merely a factor in his war with France; "he had", as a contemporary said, "to take England on his way to France". His individual opinions, moreover, were not likely to make him popular. In religion he was a Calvinist, and he was therefore distrusted by that very powerful party, the High Church party in the Church of England. In politics, though the Tory opposition to the war compelled him in 1695 to depend for a time upon a Whig ministry—the Whig Junto, as it was called—yet for the greater part of his reign he tried to ignore parties, and to rule with ministries drawn impartially from Whigs and Tories; as a consequence, he obtained the hearty support of neither party. Nor was William's personality an attractive one. Diminutive in stature, thin and fragile-looking, his appearance was only redeemed by the brightness and keenness of his eyes. His manner was cold and repellent, and his habits unsociable;<sup>2</sup> and the few friends that he possessed were all

Characters  
of William  
and Mary.

<sup>1</sup> The idea was to kill the king in a narrow lane near Turnham Green, as he was returning from his usual Saturday hunt; but the plot was discovered.

<sup>2</sup> "He spoke little and very shortly," said a contemporary, "and most commonly with a disgusting dryness." Long and solitary hunting expeditions in the New Forest were his only recreation, and he disliked conversation and all indoor games.



Dutchmen. Moreover, his health was wretched, and inclined to make him irascible and peevish. William had none of the outwardly attractive qualities which would have secured the affection of his English subjects; and they failed to do justice to the magnanimity which he showed in dealing with his enemies, his patience and calmness in times of crisis, or the unwearied industry which he displayed in public affairs. Mary, on the other hand, was an affable, kind-hearted, genial queen; it was a saying at the time that "she talked as much as William thought, or her sister, the Princess Anne, ate".<sup>1</sup> Mary's death, in 1694, was consequently a great blow to William's position, and after that his unpopularity steadily increased.

After the conclusion of the war with France, in 1697, opposition to William's policy came to a head. A *Tory* Parliament attacked—with some reason—the enormous tracts of land which the king had granted to his Dutch favourites in Ireland. Moreover, a standing army was still very unpopular, and Parliament insisted—with great stupidity—upon reducing the armed forces in England to seven thousand men. Then, again, Parliament was jealous of his foreign policy, and consequently passed those clauses in the Act of Settlement to which reference has already been made. William, indeed, was so worried by the Opposition that he seriously thought of resigning his crown, and had even drafted a proclamation for that purpose. Englishmen, in truth, were somewhat ignorant of foreign politics; and the greatness of the work accomplished by William, not only for England, but for Europe, was never realized. The king, however, had the satisfaction before his death of feeling that the nation was strongly supporting him in the War of the Spanish Succession, the opening of which he just lived to see (1702).

Two features in our National Finance make their appearance during the reigns of William and Mary. The first was the *National Debt*, which dates from 1693. By 1697 it had reached £20,000,000; by 1713, £78,000,000; and by 1815 it was to rise to the stupendous total of

<sup>1</sup> Pepys, the Diarist, saw Mary as "a little child in hanging sleeves dance most finely, so as almost to ravish one". When only fifteen and a half years old the announcement was made to her that she was to marry William, "whereupon she wept all that afternoon and the following day"; but she proved herself a most devoted wife.



£840,000,000.<sup>1</sup> The other was the *Bank of England*, which was founded in 1694, and which gave a solid foundation to England's commercial and imperial development in the next century. In 1695 occurred the restoration of the currency; the old money, which was much worn, and was often "clipped" round the edges, was called in, and a new coinage was issued, whose milled edges made clipping impossible in the future. ✓

The Princess Anne succeeded to the throne, under the terms of the Bill of Rights, on William's death, in 1702. The story of the Great War of the Spanish Succession, which was waged during her reign, has been al- The reign of Queen Anne, 1702-14. ready told. The Union with Scotland (1707)—

perhaps the most important result of her reign—will be discussed later. The history of the domestic politics whilst Anne was queen remains to be narrated. Two features deserve special notice. One is the fierceness of the party strife, especially towards the close of the reign, when it extended even to the ladies of the two parties, who, it is said, patched upon different sides of their faces, and had different designs upon their fans. ✓ It is to the struggle over the Exclusion Bill in Charles II's reign that these two great parties, known as Whigs and Tories— Whigs and Tories. nicknames given to those parties by their respective opponents—owe their origin, and in Anne's reign the differences between them were sharply defined. The Whigs were in favour of Toleration, whilst the Tories were strong upholders of the Church of England, and were jealous even of the liberties which the Dissenters had recently acquired under the Toleration Act. The Whigs upheld the constitutional government that had developed as a result of the Revolution, but the Tories still had ideas of divine right and passive obedience. The Whigs supported the War of the Spanish Succession; the Tories, on the other hand, in the earlier stages of the war, wished it to be chiefly maritime, and in the later stages were opposed to it altogether. Finally, whilst all the Whigs were in favour of the succession, on

<sup>1</sup> The National Debt helped to rivet the Commercial Classes to the Revolution Settlement, because it was thought that if the Stuarts returned they would repudiate the Debt. It therefore helped to cause the alliance between the Whig aristocracy and the merchants, as both depended for their power or prosperity in the eighteenth century on the Hanoverian dynasty.



Anne's death, of the Electress Sophia of Hanover and her son George, many of the Tories favoured James II's son. ✓

The other feature to be noticed in Anne's reign is the close connection between politics and literature. In those days the reporting of speeches in Parliament was forbidden, whilst the age of public meetings had not begun. But the increased interest that was being taken in public questions and the increased importance of Parliament made it necessary for the rival parties to influence the country; and this was done through the papers and pamphlets of the great literary men of the period. Thus *Addison*, a Whig and the editor of the *Spectator*, eventually became a Secretary of State, though he never opened his mouth in the House of Commons; whilst *Swift*, a Tory and a clergyman, composed pamphlets which had enormous political influence; and, when towards the end of Anne's reign the Tory party was in power, used to dine every week with the two leaders of the Government, in order to assist in formulating their policy.

There were two ministries during Anne's reign. The first was under the leadership of *Godolphin*, who was in close alliance with Marlborough. Of the latter something has been said already. Of the former Charles II once remarked that "little Sidney Godolphin was never in the way and never out of the way". He seems to have been a shrewd statesman, though his personality has left curiously little impression. At first the members of the Government were drawn from both parties, but the growing hostility of the Tories to the war led to the ministry becoming increasingly, and in 1708 completely, of a Whig complexion. Godolphin's ministry has justly been called "one of the most glorious in English history", for under its rule occurred the great achievements of Marlborough and of Peterborough, the captures of Gibraltar and Minorca, and the Union with Scotland.

Godolphin's Ministry came to an abrupt termination in 1710. The causes were many. The war was becoming unpopular, and it was urged with some force that Great Britain should have accepted the terms of peace offered by Louis XIV in 1706, and the still more favourable offers of 1709.

Causes of its fate.

Godolphin's ministry, 1702-1710.



Moreover, Marlborough was ambitious to be made Captain-General of the British forces for life—an ambition which frightened Englishmen into thinking that he wished to be a second Cromwell and which therefore brought unpopularity on the Whig ministers though they had not supported the proposal.

Then, again, the queen became hostile to the ministry. Though she was a person of no intellectual attainments, and appears to have had little influence in the actual administration of her Government, she was extremely popular with all classes for her kindness of heart, and because, as she said of herself, she was “perfectly English.”<sup>1</sup> She disliked a purely Whig ministry, and she could not forgive the Whigs for their attacks upon her husband, Prince George of Denmark, whilst he was alive, or for their suggestion, soon after his death, that she should take thoughts of a second husband. Moreover, the queen was very subject to the influence of those of her own sex. For some time the influence of the Duchess of Marlborough had been supreme. The duchess was a very self-willed, masterful, and somewhat quarrelsome lady; about 1708 she quarrelled with the queen, as she did subsequently with her son-in-law, her granddaughter, and even her doctors.<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Masham, who had strong Tory connections, succeeded to the first place in the queen’s affections, and the change was ominous for Godolphin’s ministry.

Above all, Anne was a strong supporter of the Church of England; and it was the cry of “the Church in danger” that finally brought about the downfall of the Whigs. A certain Doctor Sacheverell, whose chief recommendations to favour were a fine presence and a good voice, preached a sermon before the Lord Mayor, in which he advocated Passive Obedience, said that the Church was in danger

Queen Anne.

The Sacheverell trial.

<sup>1</sup> The queen had no taste for literature and music, and for some years never heard even her own band play. But she was fond of hunting, and in her later years used to follow the stag-hunt in Windsor Forest in an open chaise drawn by one horse, “which she drives herself”, wrote Swift, “and drives furiously, like Jehu”.

<sup>2</sup> The duchess got a portrait of her granddaughter, blackened its face, and hung it up with the inscription: “She is much blacker within”. In 1740 she had lain a great while ill, without speaking. Her physicians said: “She must be blistered, or she will die.” She then called out: “I won’t be blistered, and I won’t die.” And, as a matter of fact, she was not blistered, and she did not die—till four years later.



of schism, and attacked the ministers, calling them amongst other things "wiley Volpones", in allusion to a nickname of Godolphin. The Government was foolish enough to take notice of the sermon and impeached the doctor. There was great popular excitement. The queen, on her journey to the trial at Westminster Hall, was greeted with shouts of "We hope Your Majesty is for the Church and Doctor Sacheverell". Sacheverell became a popular hero and was acclaimed by cheering mobs, and after the trial was over—as a result of which he was sentenced to a light punishment<sup>1</sup>—he had a triumphal progress through the provinces on his way to Shropshire.<sup>2</sup> The queen then took action. The Whigs were dismissed and the Tories were called to office. Parliament was dissolved and in the new House of Commons there was a large Tory majority.

The Tory ministry lasted for the remainder of the queen's reign. Its leaders were *Harley*, who became *Earl of Oxford*, and *St. John*, who became *Viscount Bolingbroke*.

Tory ministry,  
1710-14; Harley,  
and St. John.

Harley possessed personal courage and was a great patron of literature—his famous collection of manuscripts, now in possession of the British Museum, is priceless. In politics he was a moderate. Hence he was liable to be accused of being irresolute in his decisions and dilatory in their execution. This moderation led him also sometimes to be shifty in his dealings with his Tory colleagues, and not averse to negotiations with his political opponents. Hence he has been called the "mole" in the politics of that day, because he was always burrowing. Bolingbroke has been described as a "brilliant knave". No one will deny his brilliancy. Swift said that he was the greatest young man he knew. Pope went further and declared him to be the greatest man in the world, whilst Pitt said that he would rather recover one of his speeches than "all the

<sup>1</sup> He was forbidden to preach for three years—a possibly agreeable punishment.

<sup>2</sup> The Sacheverell case is interesting as being one of the earliest political movements in which ladies took an active share, and the ladies were enthusiastic admirers of the doctor. "Matters of government and affairs of State", wrote a contemporary, "are become the province of the ladies. They have hardly leisure to live, little time to eat and sleep, and none at all to say their prayers." The Duchess of Marlborough, however, did not agree with her own sex in the matter—she described Sacheverell as an "ignorant and impudent incendiary".



gaps in Greek and Roman lore". His style provided a model for Gibbon the historian, and his political ideas were not without their influence upon statesmen who lived so recently as Disraeli. His knavery is more open to doubt, but it is unquestionable that his actions and policy were not so disinterested and straightforward as he makes them out to be.<sup>1</sup> Bolingbroke was impetuous, and a strong party man; and he soon supplanted Harley in the affections of the Tories. "Members", said Bolingbroke of the House of Commons, "grow fond like hounds of the man who shows them sport, and by whose halloo they are wont to be encouraged." And Harley was too fond of running with the hare to be able to cheer on his followers.

The Tory ministers proceeded to secure the objects which their supporters had most at heart. They tried to strengthen the Church and to weaken the Nonconformists by passing the *Occasional Conformity* (1711) and the *Schism Acts* (1714). The first Act was directed against the habit of the Nonconformists of qualifying for office by taking the Communion every now and again in an Anglican Church, and thus evading the Test and Corporation Acts; the second Act tried to deprive the Nonconformists of their hold upon education by forbidding anyone to teach without a licence from a bishop. To make the war unpopular Swift's genius was employed in the composition of pamphlets such as "The Conduct of the Allies", and Marlborough himself was dismissed from his employments, accused of peculation, and attacked with such violence that he left the country. The war, conducted half-heartedly for a year or two, was terminated in 1713 by the Treaty of Utrecht.

Then came the question of the *Succession to the throne*. The peaceful succession of the House of Hanover has been called the "greatest miracle in our history"; if it was not that, it was undoubtedly at one time unlikely. The majority of the people were probably Tory in sentiment, and would have preferred a Stuart, especially as the Electress Sophia of Hanover and her son George, if not unpopular, were

<sup>1</sup> "Ah, Harry," his father is reported to have said to him after he went to the House of Lords, "I always said you would be hanged, but now you are made a peer, I suppose you'll be beheaded."



completely unknown in England.<sup>1</sup> Men known to be supporters of the Stuart succession were put into positions of trust by the ministry, the Earl of Mar, for instance, being given control of Scotland, and the Duke of Ormonde being made Warden of the Cinque Ports. Two things, however, prevented the continuance of the House of Stuart on the throne of England. In the first place, the Old Pretender—and it was greatly to his credit—refused either to change or to dissemble his Roman Catholic religion. Consequently in England the Tories found themselves torn between their affection for the Anglican Church and their allegiance to the Stuart dynasty, while the Scottish nation was divided into those who had a passionate romantic loyalty to the Stuarts and those whose devotion to Protestantism made support of a Roman Catholic an impossibility.

In the second place, Anne died too soon. There were dissensions between the Tory leaders, but Bolingbroke managed to get rid of Harley, who was dismissed from the ministry. It is uncertain what Bolingbroke really intended, but it is probable that he was working for the succession of the Old Pretender. Events, however, moved too quickly for him. Two days after Harley's dismissal Anne fell very seriously ill. A council meeting was summoned to discuss the situation. Two Whig dukes who were Privy Councillors suddenly entered the meeting and, as they were legally entitled to do, took part in the discussion. As a result, it was resolved that the Treasurer's staff—the symbol of authority—should be given to Shrewsbury, a moderate Whig, and Anne, on her deathbed, gave it to him. On Anne's death, whilst the plans of Bolingbroke were still undeveloped, George I, through Shrewsbury's influence, was proclaimed king (the Electress Sophia being dead). "The Earl of Oxford was removed on Tuesday, the Queen died on Sunday," wrote Bolingbroke. "What a world is this, and how does Fortune banter us!" Had the queen lived six months, or even six weeks, longer, our history might have been very different.

<sup>1</sup> Of course by the Act of Settlement the Princess Sophia was the successor to the throne, but Queen Anne, beyond inserting her name in the Liturgy, did nothing to recognize her claim, and never invited the princess to England or gave her a title.



## 2. Scotland

The condition of Scotland on William III's accession was deplorable. It was rent by religious feuds. There was little wealth and few industries, and every bad harvest produced a famine. The southern Lowlands were exposed to the anarchy of the border district between England and Scotland. And the northern Lowlands suffered from the depredations of the Highlanders—and even as late as 1747 it was reckoned that £5000 worth of cattle were annually "lifted", whilst another £5000 was paid by various owners to save their cattle from that fate. The Highlands were in a barbarous condition; the chief had almost supreme authority over the members of his clan;<sup>1</sup> and plunder, it has been said, was at once "the passion, the trade, and the romance of the Highlander".<sup>2</sup> In the more northern parts the rooms had no chimneys, the horses dragged carts by their tails, whilst candles, potatoes, and iron (except for weapons) were unknown luxuries.

Condition  
of Scotland  
in 1689.

The reigns of William and Mary and of Anne mark the beginning of a happier and more prosperous period for Scotland. One fearful atrocity, it is true, was committed. The Battle of Killiecrankie (p. 433) and the death of Dundee (1689) did not at once terminate hostilities, and some of the clans still refused to recognize the new sovereigns. At last a proclamation was issued, promising pardon to all who took an oath of allegiance to the new Government before the last day of 1691. Only two chiefs had not taken the oath by the appointed day, and of these, one, Macdonald of Glencoe, merely failed because he had made it a point of honour to delay till the last possible moment, and had then gone to the wrong place to take the oath. Sir John Dalrymple, the joint Secretary of State, was completely out of sympathy with the Highlanders, and deter-

The Glencoe  
massacre,  
1692.

<sup>1</sup> Some chiefs had a private executioner of their own; and the town of Perth, in 1707, sent a request to Lord Drummond for the occasional use of his executioner—a request which was very courteously granted.

<sup>2</sup> To "lift" cattle, especially at Michaelmas time, when they were fat, was of course a very profitable enterprise; and Highlanders, according to a contemporary, before starting on an expedition, "prayed as earnestly to heaven as if they were engaged in the most laudable enterprise".



mined to make a signal example of the people of Glencoe. Troops were sent there commanded by their hereditary enemy, Campbell of Glenlyon, who, after being entertained by the Macdonalds for a fortnight, suddenly made an attack upon them and brutally murdered the chief and thirty-seven of his clan (1692).

The condition of Scotland, however, rapidly improved after the Revolution of 1688. The Bank of Scotland, founded in 1695, was an incentive to trade; the Habeas Corpus Act, passed in 1701, and similar to that passed in England thirty years before, protected the liberty of the individual. But to three things, above all, did Scotland owe her prosperity. In the first place, Presbyterianism, the religion of the great majority, was made, in 1689, the established religion, whilst the Episcopalians, who believed in the rule of bishops, obtained toleration. Hence Scotland obtained what she most needed—the cessation of religious strife—though a small sect of Presbyterian

Causes of  
improvement.

extremists refused to enter the establishment, and persisted in demanding the enforcing of the Solemn League and Covenant. Secondly, a law was passed in 1696 establishing schools in every parish, and the two centuries of education which Scotland has enjoyed account for the intellectual superiority of its inhabitants.

Thirdly, the Union between England and Scotland was achieved in 1707. There had been great difficulties in the way.

The Union  
between Eng-  
land and Scot-  
land, 1707.

English merchants did not wish to give commercial concessions or English Churchmen to recognize Presbyterianism. Scotland was legitimately proud of her nationality and had no wish to have her individuality absorbed in that of England. And, moreover, Scotland attributed to English jealousy and deliberate obstruction the failure of an attempt made by her merchants in 1698 to develop a trading centre at the Isthmus of Darien (now Panama). It gradually became clear, however, that the slender monarchic union would have to be either broken, or very considerably strengthened. There was no end to the complications that might arise from having two absolutely independent parliaments in the island, particularly in regard to the delicate succession question that might develop when Anne died. After long negotiations the Union was at last completed. By its terms Scotland was allowed



forty-five members in the House of Commons and sixteen peers in the House of Lords; she contributed one-fortieth to the Land Tax and was paid nearly £400,000 for sharing in the English National Debt. Scotland was to preserve her own Law Courts, whilst a separate Act secured her Presbyterian religion. Above all, free trade was established between England and Scotland, and Scotland was allowed to trade with the colonies. Scotland was at last given her industrial opportunity. Scottish towns, and especially Glasgow, grew with amazing rapidity, whilst Scottish shipping and manufactures proved formidable rivals to the shippers and manufacturers of England. Moreover, no one can fail to realize the immense share Scotsmen have had in developing the trade and the prosperity of the British Empire.

Yet the Union was not popular for some time. In Scotland, during the Rebellions of 1715 and 1745, one of the cries was for the abolition of the Union. In England the Scots were long unpopular, and at the beginning of George III's reign Bute's Scottish ancestry was one of the causes of his great unpopularity when Prime Minister. But gradually the national prejudices faded away, and the natives of both countries learnt to appreciate the immense advantages each derived from the Union. Henceforth the histories of England and Scotland are linked together.

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## XXXV. Foreign Affairs and the Empire, 1714-63

With the accession of George I our foreign politics were affected by a new influence. George I and his successors—till the accession of Queen Victoria—were not only <sup>The influence of Hanover.</sup> Kings of England, but Electors of Hanover. Englishmen are perhaps apt to regard Hanover, in the elder Pitt's words, as a "despicable German Electorate"; but in reality it was amongst the foremost of German States, and had important naval positions in the North Sea. The devotion which George I and George II felt for Hanover increased the complications and difficulties of our foreign policy during their rule; and there



was always a danger of Great Britain being drawn into wars to protect Hanoverian interests. Indeed, very soon after George I came to the throne, demonstrations, which were made by the British fleet to further the ambitions of Hanover, nearly produced a war, first with Sweden, and then with Russia.

War, however, was averted, and for twenty-six years after the signing of the Treaty of Utrecht—from 1713 to 1739—Great

British  
relations  
with France.

Britain enjoyed a period of repose. Both France and Great Britain wished to uphold the Treaty of Utrecht, and for a great part of this period each country was ruled by a peace-loving minister, *Walpole* being chief minister in Great Britain from 1721-42, and *Fleury* being responsible for French policy from 1720-29. There was even at times an alliance or informal co-operation between these two powers—a very unusual state of affairs in the eighteenth century.

On the other hand, the rulers of Austria and Spain were dissatisfied with the Treaty of Utrecht. Our chief difficulties were

Great Britain  
and Spain,  
1714-39.

with *Spain*. In 1718, Great Britain prevented her from obtaining possession of Sicily by demolishing her fleet off *Cape Passaro*;<sup>1</sup> whilst, in 1725, an alliance which Spain had made with Austria, in the hope of recovering Gibraltar and Minorca, was checkmated by a counter-alliance between Great Britain and France. A few years later trade controversies with Spain became acute. The Spaniards jealously tried to exclude all other nations from trading with their possessions in South America, though they failed to develop the trade on their own account. But British ships did a great deal of illicit trade with Spanish America, especially through the solitary British ship which by the Treaty of Utrecht was allowed to be sent there annually. This ship, whilst in the Spanish port, was emptied of its cargo each day, and refilled under cover of night by small boats from other ships outside the harbour.

The Spaniards, not unnaturally incensed at these proceedings,

<sup>1</sup> The Spanish fleet of eighteen sail was utterly destroyed by an English fleet of twenty-one sail under Admiral Byng. Part of the Spanish fleet fled, and took refuge inshore. A Captain Walton was sent in pursuit, and his dispatch announcing his success is said to be the shortest on record and to have run as follows: "Sir, we have taken and destroyed all the Spanish ships which were upon the coast: the number as per margin. Respectfully, &c., G. Walton." But, as a matter of fact, this was only the ending of the letter.



had retaliated by searching on the high seas British ships whose destination might be Spanish America, and treating British sailors with great brutality. Consequently, British feeling was roused, and the politicians opposed to Walpole, then the chief minister, thinking they had got a good party cry, took care to fan the indignation. Finally, anger reached boiling-point when a certain Captain Jenkins produced his ear in a bottle before the House of Commons, and asserted that it had been cut off by the Spaniards. He was asked "what his feelings were when he found himself in the hands of such barbarians", and he answered in words which were probably suggested to him beforehand, but which had the effect desired by the opposition of stimulating patriotic fervour: "I commended my soul to my God, and my cause to my country".<sup>1</sup> Walpole, unable to withstand popular opinion, after futile negotiations with Spain, declared war in 1739.

Jenkins's ear.

The year 1739 ushered in a new and prolonged period of conflict. The war with Spain, somewhat discreditable to our honour in its origin, was discreditable to our arms in its conduct. An attempt on Cartagena, in Spanish America, was a miserable failure, and our only success was a voyage round the world undertaken by Anson, who captured an enormous amount of treasure on the west coast of South America.<sup>2</sup>

The war with Spain, 1739.

But meanwhile, in 1740, another Succession War broke out. This had to do with Austria. Charles VI, the emperor and ruler of the vast Austrian dominions—known to us already, in the Spanish Succession War, as the Arch-duke Charles—had one child, a daughter, Maria Theresa. He persuaded nearly all the European powers to recognize an arrangement known as the *Pragmatic Sanction*, by

The Austrian Succession War, 1740-8.

<sup>1</sup> It has been doubted whether Jenkins ever really lost an ear at all, or, if he did, it has been asserted that he lost it in an English pillory. According to Jenkins's story, the ear had been cut off in 1731 by a ferocious Spanish captain, by name Fandino, who was himself captured by a British frigate eleven years later after a desperate resistance.

<sup>2</sup> Anson succeeded in capturing the great treasure-ship that sailed every year from Manila to Acapulco. The treasure he secured, worth some £500,000, was paraded through the city, on its way to the Bank of England, in a procession of thirty-two wagons, the ship's company marching alongside with colours flying and band playing.



which it was laid down that all his kingdoms and territories should pass undivided to this daughter. But on Charles's death, in 1740, the Elector of Bavaria, the husband of Charles's elder brother's daughter, claimed the Austrian dominions. The King of France supported him, and sent two armies across the Rhine. Meanwhile Frederick II, known in history as Frederick the Great, who had just succeeded to the Prussian throne, disregarded his promise to Charles to recognize his daughter, and seized Silesia, which belonged to Austria.

Feelings of chivalry and also fears of what might happen to the Austrian Netherlands impelled Great Britain to assist Maria Theresa, and, moreover, the Electors of Hanover were traditional allies of the House of Habsburg. Hence, once again, England and France, though they did not declare formal war till 1744, found themselves engaged in hostilities. The military operations in which we took part were at the outset somewhat complicated, and it is sufficient to say that the position of Maria Theresa was at first very precarious, but that the loyalty of her subjects, and especially of the Hungarians, saved her.

Then *Carteret* became, on Walpole's resignation in 1742, responsible for our foreign policy. A gifted man, with great knowledge of European politics, and with the advantage, rare at that time, of being able to talk fluently in German, he belongs to the small number—perhaps fortunately small—of foreign secretaries who wished Great Britain to play a large part in Continental politics. He succeeded, first, in negotiating a peace between Frederick and Maria Theresa, by which Prussia withdrew from the struggle, and then in combining nearly all the German powers, with the exception of Prussia, against France. An army composed of English and Hanoverians, under the command of Lord Stair and accompanied by George II himself, was directed to evict the French from Ger-  
Carteret's  
policy,  
1742-4.
Dettingen,  
1743.
 Dettingen, many. But the army soon found itself in an apparently hopeless position at *Dettingen*, with no food, with the River Main on one flank and impenetrable mountains and forests on the other, whilst its advance and retreat were covered by French forces. Fortunately the French left their strong position, and the British were able to make a decisive charge and snatch



a victory from the jaws of defeat.<sup>1</sup> As a consequence the French troops retired from Germany, and the situation was relieved.

The coalition of German powers, however, soon broke up. Prussia again took up arms against Austria, and Carteret, owing to his unpopularity at home, retired from office. Meanwhile, a French force of 80,000 men, under the famous <sup>Fontenoy, 1745-</sup> Marshal Saxe, invaded the Austrian Netherlands; and, despite the efforts of the British, it was everywhere victorious. In 1745 the British were defeated at *Fontenoy*, though the infantry won great glory by a magnificent charge, which was finally checked by the Irish brigade serving in the French army. In the same year the rising of the Young Pretender (see p. 484) led to the withdrawal of the British troops from the Continent. The French proceeded to occupy nearly the whole of the Austrian Netherlands, and when the British returned two years later they met with no success.

The war was ended in 1748 by the Treaty of *Aix-la-Chapelle*. Maria Theresa was left in possession of the Austrian dominions, including the Austrian Netherlands, though Prussia kept Silesia; otherwise no change of importance <sup>Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, 1748.</sup> took place. The war, however, so far as Great Britain and France were concerned, was not merely European. The French took Madras in India. We took Louisburg, the great port of Cape Breton Island, the Gibraltar, as it has been called, of the New World. These two places were exchanged at the peace. Concerning the right of search, the original cause of the war with Spain, nothing was said at all.

The Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle settled nothing permanently. It was only a truce, and a few years later, in 1756, a mightier war was to break out—the Seven Years' War. The rival ambitions of Great Britain and France in <sup>The British and French in North America.</sup> America and in India had to be adjusted—and the sword alone could do that. Something has already been said about our colonies in North America. The British colonies—

<sup>1</sup> George II's horse, frightened by the crackle of musketry, ran away with him at the beginning of the battle; the king, therefore, fought during the remainder of the time on foot, saying that he could trust his legs not to run away with him. He behaved with the utmost bravery, encouraging his soldiers: "Steady, my boys; fire, my brave boys, give them fire; they will soon run." In honour of the victory, Handel composed a *Te Deum*.



thirteen in number—stretched along the shores of the Atlantic. To the north of them lay the French possession of Canada, to the south and west of them French Louisiana. The French ambitions were brilliant in conception. Just as in our own times the French desired a sphere of influence that would stretch



from the east to the west of Africa, so in the eighteenth century they wished to join Louisiana and Canada by occupying the land behind and to the west of the British settlements. At first sight the French ambitions might seem absurd; for the French colonists in Canada only numbered some 60,000, and the English colonists were nearly a million and a half. But the French settlements were compact, whilst those of the English were



scattered. The French colony was united, and autocratically governed by capable French officials. The thirteen English colonies, on the other hand, were entirely separate in government, and often ill-disposed to one another; and all attempts to combine them for joint action had hitherto been complete failures. Moreover, river valleys favoured the French designs. Throw a cork into the River Alleghany at its source near Lake Erie, and it will eventually find its way—if it meets with no obstacles—by the River Ohio and the Mississippi, to the Gulf of Mexico. Mountains—the Alleghany Mountains—on the other hand, interposed a natural barrier to the British expansion westward.

After the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle events moved fast in America. The French seemed likely to achieve their ambitions. South of Montreal they had already built, on the shores of Lake Champlain, two forts at *Crown Point* and at *Ticonderoga*. They now developed the building of a line of forts from north to south to secure the river valleys. Meantime the British, owing partly to the disunion of the colonies themselves and partly to the procrastination of the home government, had done nothing except the building of *Oswego* on the south side of Lake Ontario. Then in 1754 came the building by the French, near the western boundary of Pennsylvania and at the junction of three rivers, of *Fort Duquesne*; and the last link, it has been said, in the French chain of forts was forged. Its building at once led to war in America. Two attempts to capture it were made, the first under Washington in 1754, and the second under Braddock in 1755; and both were disastrous.<sup>1</sup> The outlook for the French in America was bright, when in 1756 formal war was declared between Great Britain and France.

But in the east as well as in the west, in India as well as in America, French and British ambitions clashed. Though on the west coast Bombay belonging to the English East India company and Mahé belonging to the French East India com-

<sup>1</sup> Braddock, who had pushed forward with twelve hundred men, was caught in an ambush some seven miles from the fort, and lost nearly two-thirds of his force. He himself fought most bravely, and, after having five horses shot under him, was mortally wounded, and died next day.



pany lay far apart, their factories on the east coast were in the same districts. In the north the English Calcutta lay close to the French Chandernagore, whilst in the south the French Pondicherry lay between, though at some distance from, Madras and Fort St. David. Both companies had reached a point when for their future commercial development some interference with the politics of the interior was probable. It was, however, the condition of India itself which made that interference inevitable.

India, it must be remembered, is not a country like France or Germany, but a large Continent. Its area is almost equal to, and its population is greater than, that of all Europe if Russia is excluded. The inhabitants of this vast continent speak some fifty languages, and they vary in colour from the light brown of the Northern Pathan to the black of the Southern Tamil; and they are divided into races which, in the words of a recent viceroy, differ from one another "as much as the Esquimaux from the Spaniard or the Irishman from the Turk". It may be urged that the Hindu religion gives a certain unifying influence; but it must be borne in mind that the Mahommedans—to say nothing of other religious sects such as the Parsees and Sikhs—constitute a very strong minority.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the Hindus are themselves divided into some 3000 castes, the members of which have little social intercourse with one another; and their religion, it has been said, exhibits the worship of innumerable gods and an endless diversity of ritual. The religion of the well-educated Brahmin—the highest caste—may be called a form of Deism; the religion of the ordinary Hindu peasant embraces the worship of many local deities, and almost every village has its own particular objects of veneration.

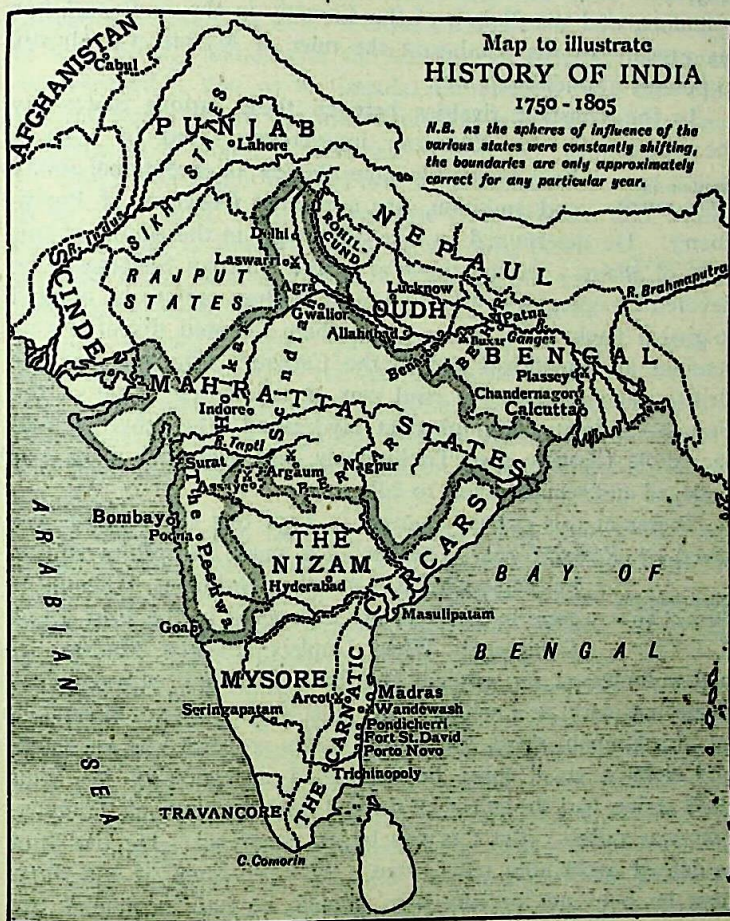
The great Mahommedan dynasty, generally known as the Mogul dynasty, had, for a time, brought nearly the whole of India under its control. Established in the sixteenth century, it had gradually extended its power, especially under *Akbar*—the contemporary

English and French East India Companies.  
The races of India.  
Its anarchical condition after 1707.

<sup>1</sup> According to the last census, the Hindus number at the present time about 70 per cent of the total population.



of Elizabeth—and *Aurangzeb*. But with the death of the last-named in 1707 the empire had begun to break asunder and India fell into a condition of anarchy. From the north the



King of Persia came in 1739 and sacked Delhi, the Mogul capital. The Afghans after six successive invasions established themselves in the Punjab, until finally they gave way, towards the end of the century, to the Sikhs. In the north-east the



rulers of Bengal and Oudh were practically independent. In Central India, the Mahrattas—Hindu tribes—made expeditions north and east from their two great centres at Poona and at Nagpur. In the south the Nizam of Hyderabad was the greatest potentate, and the Nabob of the Carnatic in the south-east was his vassal. In the south-west the ruler of Mysore was shortly to possess formidable power.

In the constant rivalries between these various States lay the opportunity for European interference. And in 1741 a Frenchman, by name *Dupleix*, of exceptional ability and ambition, was appointed Governor of Pondicherry. He determined to take advantage, in the south, of this state of affairs. During the War of the Austrian Succession he devoted his energies to the capture of Madras, only to be obliged to give it back at the peace. But there followed disputed successions at Hyderabad and in the Carnatic. Dupleix and the British each supported a rival pair of candidates. One of the French candidates triumphed at Hyderabad; the other secured the whole Carnatic save Trichinopoly, and even that place was besieged and seemed likely to fall.

It was at this critical moment in 1751 that the position was saved by *Robert Clive*. The son of a small Shropshire squire, he had—after a somewhat turbulent boyhood—gone to India to act as a clerk in the East India Company.<sup>1</sup> When Dupleix attacked Madras, he had volunteered for service, and both then and subsequently made his mark as a soldier. He now proposed, as a diversion, an attack upon *Arcot*, the capital. His proposal was accepted, and with a small force he succeeded in capturing it. This bold action had the effect he desired, and the siege of Trichinopoly was raised. But this was by no means all. He had now to defend Arcot until relief came. With two hundred and thirty men he held on for fifty days, though he had to defend two

Dupleix in  
India, 1741-54.

Clive and the  
Siege of Arcot,  
1751.

<sup>1</sup> He was, even in early life, of a somewhat pugnacious disposition, and, at the age of six, was described as "out of measure addicted to fighting", whilst, later on, the shopkeepers of Market Drayton, so tradition says, used to pay "a small tribute of apples and halfpence" to Clive and a band of his schoolfellows in order to preserve their windows from molestation. Clive, when he reached India, was for some time profoundly unhappy, and tried to commit suicide, but the pistol did not fire.



breaches, the one of fifty and the other of ninety feet, against an army of ten thousand men. From the successful defence of Arcot, as Macaulay says, dates the renown of the British arms in the East. We had shown that we were not mere pedlars but fighters as well. Further successes led to the triumph of the British candidate in the Carnatic, and in 1754 Dupleix was recalled. Yet, as in Canada, the struggle was not over; and the Seven Years' War was to prove as important for its effects in India as for those in Canada.

The Seven Years' War did not begin formally till 1756. But, as we have seen, hostilities between Great Britain and France had occurred in America and in India long before the war broke out in Europe. The capture and defence of Arcot by Clive occurred in 1751, the English attacks on Fort Duquesne began in 1754, whilst in 1755 hostilities spread to the sea, on which the British captured two French men-of-war carrying soldiers to Canada. Finally, in the early months of 1756 the French attacked Minorca; and with this last event war was regularly declared between the two countries.

Outbreak of  
Seven Years'  
War, 1756.

It was not only, however, the rivalry between France and Great Britain that brought about the war, but also that between Austria and Prussia. Maria Theresa had no intention of allowing Frederick to retain Silesia; she felt its loss so keenly that she could not see a native of that country, it was said, without weeping. The only question was as to the partners which the rival powers would take. In the War of the Austrian Succession the allies on each side had been dissatisfied with one another. For this and for other reasons the old alliances were reversed in the Seven Years' War. Austria and France—hitherto the great European rivals—for once made alliance together, and subsequently persuaded Russia to join them; and Great Britain bound itself to Austria's rival, Prussia.

Rivalry of  
Prussia and  
Austria.

The Seven Years' War, so far as Great Britain is concerned, may be divided into two periods. The first two years (1756-7) were years of almost unrelieved failure. The *Duke of Newcastle* (see p. 494) for the greater part of the time was chief



minister. Procrastinating and ignorant, timid and undecided, he was "unfit", said George II, "to be Chamberlain to the smallest Court in Germany"; and it would certainly be difficult to find anyone less fitted to carry on a great war. Commanders, both on land and sea, uninspired by the Government at home, planned their strategy without thought, and fought their battles by obsolete and formal methods. Consequently, at the beginning of the war, Great Britain was in terror of invasion, and to her disgrace Hessians and Hanoverians were brought over to defend her own shores.

British failures  
in the war,  
1756-7.

Meantime, *Byng* was dispatched with a fleet badly provisioned and poorly equipped to relieve *Minorca*, which, as has been stated, had been attacked by the French. Off that island he fought an indecisive action with the French fleet when he ought to have avoided a battle and confined his attention to harassing the French communications. He then, supported by the advice of a council of war, returned home, leaving *Minorca* to be taken by the French. The nation was furious. *Byng* was tried for neglect of duty, found guilty, and shot on the quarterdeck of his own ship in Portsmouth Harbour—a scapegoat for the incompetence of the British Government and the want of seamanship on the part of the British navy.<sup>1</sup> In America, the British lost *Oswego* and *Fort William Henry*, and an intended attack on Louisburg came to nothing. In Germany, the Duke of Cumberland, George II's son, who had been sent to protect Hanover and to cover the western frontier of Prussia from a French invasion, was defeated at *Hastenbeck*, and forced to sign the convention of Kloster-seven, by which he agreed to evacuate the country (1757).<sup>2</sup> Only two wonderful victories won by our ally, King Frederick of Prussia, over the French

<sup>1</sup> *Byng*, who was the son of the admiral who had won the battle off Cape Passaro in 1720, was unfortunate in being the first victim of a new rule. Officers could previously be shot for "cowardice" or "disaffection"; but "negligence" had recently been added as a capital offence, and *Byng* came under this charge because he was found guilty of not having done his utmost to save *Minorca*. Voltaire's *mot* on this execution is well known; it was done, he said, "pour encourager les autres".

<sup>2</sup> George II was very angry as a consequence, and on Cumberland's return to London only gave him an interview of four minutes, telling him that "he had ruined his country and spoiled everything". At cards that evening, when the duke entered the room, the king said openly: "Here is my son who has ruined me and disgraced himself!"



at Rossbach and over the Austrians at Leuthen saved the situation.

The last five years of the war (1758-63) are, on the other hand, years of almost untarnished glory. Midway in the year 1757 *William Pitt* formed a coalition ministry with the *Duke of Newcastle*. Pitt had all the qualities necessary for a great war minister. He combined supreme self-confidence with the power of inspiring others. "I believe," he said of himself, "I can save this country and that no one else can." "No one," said an officer, "can enter his closet without coming out of it a braver man." He had the capacity for selecting good men; no doubt he appointed some bad officers, but Hawke and Wolfe and Ferdinand of Brunswick are great names which attest his judgment. Above all, he had not only the genius of conceiving great and sound strategical designs, but also the capacity, with infinite patience and thoroughness, to plan their execution. No doubt he was arrogant and overbearing. He threatened to impeach one colleague who opposed him, and another complained that his language was of a kind seldom heard west of Constantinople. But these very qualities enabled him to become the only genuine war minister Great Britain has had since the development of cabinet government, a minister possessing the almost undisputed control of the army and the navy as well as of the diplomacy of the country. For his ally Pitt had Frederick, King of Prussia, and it was through the combination of these great men that the foundations of the modern Empire of Great Britain and of the modern Kingdom of Prussia were securely laid.

British successes, 1758-63, and Pitt's influence.

Pitt's strategy was briefly as follows. Assistance must be given to the King of Prussia. Even the generalship of Frederick the Great would not have enabled Prussia to withstand alone the combined forces of Austria, France, and Russia. Moreover, it was part of Pitt's policy to absorb French energies as far as possible in Europe. "We shall win Canada," Pitt said, "on the banks of the Elbe." Consequently he not only paid subsidies to Frederick of Prussia, but also maintained in Germany an army partly British and partly Hanoverian under *Ferdinand of Brunswick* to protect Hanover and the western flank of Prussia from the French. In addition

Strategy of Pitt.



he attacked various places on the French coast. These attacks, though not very successful,<sup>1</sup> kept the French nation in a continual state of alarm, and led, according to Pitt's information, to some thirty thousand French troops being employed in defensive work at home instead of aggressive operations elsewhere. In the West Indies and in the East Pitt's object was, at first, to protect British commerce, and later, to extend British possessions. His chief energies, however, were concentrated on the conquest of Canada; it was there we were to make the first bid for victory whilst the French wasted their efforts on the Continent.

In 1758 the initial successes began. In America, three separate armies advanced; the first, it is true, failed to take Ticonderoga; but of the others, one, with the aid of the fleet, captured Louisburg, and the other Fort Duquesne. Two raids were made on the French coast. The first went to St. Malo and destroyed a great deal of French shipping; but the second, after doing much damage at Cherbourg, revisited St. Malo, and on this occasion had to make a disastrously precipitate retreat. In Germany, Ferdinand of Brunswick was able to reach the Rhine, though he had to retreat later on. And just before the end of the year an expedition which had been dispatched to West Africa captured the French settlement of Goree.

With 1759 came a year more fruitful of successes than any other in our history. Upon Canada Pitt planned a twofold advance. Amherst was to take Ticonderoga, which he did, and to reach Quebec—which he was unable to accomplish. Wolfe, one of Pitt's favourite officers, was selected to command the soldiers and Saunders to command the sailors of another expedition which should go up the river St. Lawrence to attack Quebec. Saunders, in spite of fog and contrary winds, took the fleet and the transports up the St. Lawrence without mishap.

*Quebec* stands upon a rocky promontory at the junction of the river St. Charles and the river St. Lawrence. Montcalm, the French commander, had fortified the bank of the river St. Lawrence from the point where the river St.

The campaign of 1758.

The year of victories, 1759.

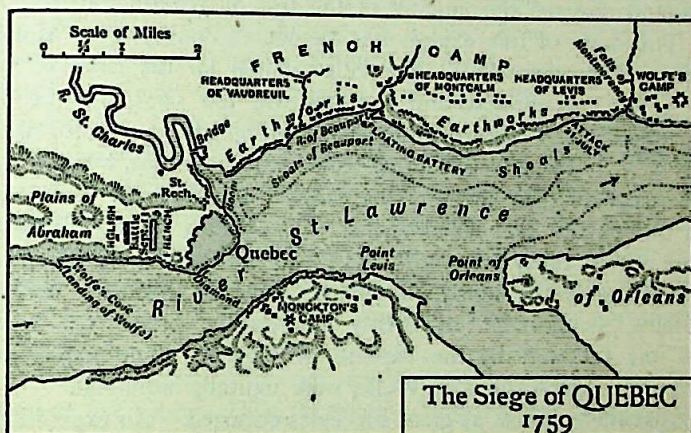
The attack on Quebec.

<sup>1</sup> An opponent of Pitt's spoke of them sneeringly "as breaking windows with guineas", and they were undoubtedly expensive.



Charles joins it to a point some eight miles down stream where another river, the Montmorency, flows into it. Wolfe had, with inferior forces, to fight an enemy who was strictly on the defensive. He at once seized the Isle of Orleans, which lay below Quebec. But he could not succeed in tempting Montcalm from his entrenchments; and an attack made upon the French from across the river Montmorency was a failure. The summer wore on and matters looked hopeless.

Meantime, however, some of the British ships had succeeded



in passing the Quebec batteries, and in getting above the city. It was this achievement which enabled Wolfe to make his master-stroke. The cliffs on the north bank of the St. Lawrence above Quebec are steep and precipitous, but about a mile and a half beyond that fortress Wolfe had discovered a zigzag path which led to their summit. He determined to attempt a night attack at this place, and accordingly made arrangements, with great skill, to divert the enemy's attention from that quarter. Below Quebec, Montcalm's attention was occupied by a bombardment from the main body of the fleet under Saunders, whilst the garrison in the city itself had an energetic attack directed upon it from the opposite bank. Meanwhile Wolfe himself and a large part of his troops had embarked in the ships which were above Quebec. On the night of the attack the ships were some six miles above the



intended landing-place so as to distract the attention of Bougainville, who with a large force was watching these ships, from Wolfe's real objective.

Brilliantly conceived, the plan was no less brilliantly executed. About 2 a.m. on the morning of September 13, the ships' boats, laden with soldiers, started on their journey. They deceived two sentinels on the bank by pretending to be some expected French provision boats, and then a small landing-party got on shore, climbed up the path, surprised the small guard at the top of the cliff, and covered the landing of the rest of Wolfe's forces.

The news of this exploit was, of course, conveyed to Montcalm and Bougainville. The latter waited for the news to be confirmed, and was any way too far off to be of service; but Montcalm, after some hesitation, through being uncertain of Saunders's intentions, hurried up and marshalled his men on the *Heights of Abraham*. Towards ten o'clock the French advanced. The British waited till they came within thirty-five yards, gave two murderous volleys, and then charged, the newly-enlisted Highlanders especially distinguishing themselves. In twenty minutes the battle was over, and was followed by the capture of Quebec. The heroes of each side, Montcalm and Wolfe, were mortally wounded.<sup>1</sup>

The Heights  
of Abraham,  
Sept. 13.

Battle of  
Minden,  
Aug. 1.

Elsewhere almost as great successes occurred. An expedition sent to the West Indies failed, indeed, to take Martinique, but took Guadeloupe instead.. In Germany, Ferdinand, with an army composed of various nationalities, had to retire before two other armies and leave Hanover unprotected. By a brilliant counterstroke he suddenly attacked one French army at *Minden*. Nine battalions of British infantry, though exposed to a cross fire of artillery, charged through three successive lines of hostile cavalry and tumbled them to ruin; and but for the failure of Lord George Sackville to follow up so mag-

<sup>1</sup> Wolfe, at the age of sixteen, fought in the battle of Dettingen, and had to act as adjutant of his battalion. At the age of twenty-two he was given command of a regiment, and proved himself an admirable commander. He was a person of literary tastes. As his boat was going down the St. Lawrence on the night of the attack, he is said to have quoted some lines of Gray's *Elegy*, exclaiming: "Now, gentlemen, I would rather have written that poem than take Quebec!" George II had a high opinion of Wolfe's capacity. On one occasion someone said to him that Wolfe was mad. "Mad, is he?" was the king's answer; "then I wish he would bite some of my other generals."



nificent a charge with the cavalry, the victory might have been an overwhelming one.

Meanwhile the French had been planning the invasion of England. The fleets at Toulon and at Brest were to unite and to convoy the troops across. The Toulon fleet left harbour; but it was discovered going through the Straits of Gibraltar, and Boscawen, the British admiral, started in pursuit in under three hours—a wonderful performance. By the end of the next day the greater number of the French ships had been dispersed or destroyed off *Lagos*, and the remnant had retired to Cadiz (August 18). The Brest fleet took advantage of the absence of Hawke's blockading fleet, which had been driven away by a fierce storm, to escape, and sailed south.<sup>1</sup> But Hawke pursued it to *Quiberon Bay*, and on a lee shore during a November gale, in a bay full of reefs and shoals, fought it, captured two of its number, and destroyed two others. The remainder of the French fleet was dispersed, seven ships taking refuge up a river, from which they only escaped some fifteen months later. The French plan of invasion therefore absolutely failed. The fight in Quiberon Bay makes a wonderful ending to a wonderful year.

The later years of the war saw further successes. In 1760—the year of George III's accession—Montreal was captured, and the conquest of Canada was completed. In 1761 the British captured Belleisle, off the west coast of France. In that same year Spain joined France. Pitt had secret intelligence of this alliance, and had wanted to declare war on Spain before it declared war on us, and to capture the annual treasure fleet that came from Spanish America. The cabinet would not consent, and consequently Pitt resigned and Bute became head of the ministry. Spain, when the treasure fleet safely reached her harbours, declared war. But she was only to lose from her intervention. For in 1762 Great Britain captured Havana, the capital of Cuba, and Manila, the capital of

Battles of Lagos  
(Aug. 18) and  
Quiberon Bay  
(Nov. 20).

British  
successes,  
1761-2.

<sup>1</sup> Hawke had entered the navy in 1720 at the age of fourteen. To Hawke is due what has been called a veritable revolution in naval strategy, for he instituted in 1759 the system of a blockade over the French port of Brest. He did this effectually for a period of six months from May to November, 1759. The French fleet only finally escaped because a very bad storm forced Hawke to take refuge at Torbay.



the Philippine Islands; whilst, to her other captures from France, Great Britain added Martinique and St. Lucia. Meantime negotiations had been begun for peace, and in 1763 the peace came.

Before giving the terms of peace, we must turn to the course of the war in India. There also it opened gloomily. In the north, in 1756, a new Nabob of Bengal, *Surajah Dowlah*, had, within two months of his accession, quarrelled with the British. He seized Calcutta, and there perpetrated the ghastly tragedy of the "Black Hole", putting one hundred and forty-six people—of whom only twenty-three survived—in a hot Indian night in a prison barely twenty feet square, and with only two small barred windows. Clive came up from Madras and retook Calcutta. In 1757—in the very same month that Pitt took office—he won on the field of *Plassey* with three thousand men, and with only eight guns, a victory over an army of fifty thousand men with forty guns. Clive was materially helped by the treachery of Meer Jaffier, one of the nabob's generals, and by the fact that a thunderstorm wetted the enemy's gunpowder, whilst tarpaulins protected his own; but even so, it was superb audacity on the part of Clive to risk a battle. That victory marks the beginning of the political ascendancy of the East India Company in Bengal; the Company put Meer Jaffier on the throne, and was given in return a substantial amount of land round Calcutta.

In the south matters had begun badly, as in the north, and the French took Fort St. David and besieged Madras; but they were quickly driven away. Brilliant success was to follow. In the year of victories—in 1759—the capture of *Masulipatam* gave the English East India Company not only some eighty miles of coast line in the Circars, but substituted English for French influence at the Court of the Nizam of Hyderabad; whilst in the following year, at *Wandewash*, Eyre Coote won a victory over the French which led to the capture of Pondicherry and the other French settlements.

The Treaty of Paris in 1763 ended the war which had been so glorious to our arms. In America, Great Britain received Canada, the French territory on the east of the Mississippi,



Cape Breton Island, and all other islands in the River and Gulf of St. Lawrence, besides Florida, which she received from Spain in exchange for Havannah. In the West Indies, she received Dominica, Tobago, and Grenada; in the Mediterranean, Minorca; and in Africa, the settlements on the river Senegal. But Great Britain gave back a good deal. To Spain she returned rich Havana and Manila—the news of the capture of the latter was not received till negotiations were practically completed. France recovered Belleisle and Goree, strong Martinique and wealthy St. Lucia; and her settlements in India were restored to her on condition that she should not fortify them. To France also was ceded the right to fish off the Newfoundland coast, and two small islands were given to her for the use of her fishermen. No doubt if Pitt had been in office the terms would have been better; but, even as it is, the peace marks a great stage forward in the advance of our empire. With regard to Germany, France agreed to give up all the territories in that country which she had occupied. Frederick the Great held, however, that the British by negotiating a peace separately with the French had basely deserted him; and though the charge was not true, it affected Prussian sentiment towards Great Britain for a considerable period.

## XXXVI. Domestic Politics and the First Two Georges, 1714–60

### I. The British Constitution, 1714–1832

We must turn aside for a while from the review of the great wars to sketch the domestic affairs of Great Britain after 1714. Parliament, as a result of the Revolution of 1688, had obtained control of legislation and taxation. William III, however, as has been pointed out, chose his own ministers and directed both the home and foreign policy of the nation; and even Anne often



presided at meetings of the cabinet<sup>1</sup>—as the meetings of heads of departments came to be called—and directly appointed the ministers. But with the accession of the House of Hanover came a great change, and it may be convenient here to summarize the chief features of the constitution during the hundred years after 1714.

"The Act of Settlement had given us," it has been said, "a foreign sovereign; the presence of a foreign sovereign gave us a Prime Minister." George I could not speak English—Walpole, after 1721 the king's chief minister, had to brush up his Latin in order to converse with the king in that language—and George II only spoke it with a strong German accent; while neither of the two kings was sufficiently interested in or intimate with British politics to comprehend its details. Consequently neither of them attended cabinet meetings; and George III, when he came to the throne in 1760, was unable, despite his desire, to do so owing to the precedent set by his predecessors. Hence it was natural that one minister should preside over the cabinet and direct its proceedings; and

**The Prime Minister.**  
**The cabinet system.**

gradually it came about that he and not the king appointed his colleagues to the ministry, and that he obtained the title of Prime Minister. Moreover, the king, as he was not present at the cabinet meetings where the details were discussed, gradually lost the power of deciding on what was to be done. He would be told that such and such had happened, and that the advice of his minister was to do this. If he did not understand, or were careless, or not interested, he agreed without further comment. Gradually, the other characteristics of our present system of cabinet government were evolved: ministers were chosen from the same party; they became jointly responsible for the policy pursued; and they became dependent for the continuance of their power, not upon the king, but upon the House of Commons. Hitherto the Crown had decided, though the

<sup>1</sup> The privy council had grown too large for consultative purposes; consequently an inner royal council had developed, which was first called a "cabinet" in the reign of Charles I. After the Revolution the cabinet became an established institution. A statesman of Anne's reign illustrated the difference between the privy council and the cabinet thus: "The privy council were such as were thought to know everything and knew nothing, while those of the cabinet thought that nobody knew anything but themselves".



ministers might be consulted; but as time goes on the position is reversed—the ministers decided, though the Crown might be consulted. Moreover, the Crown ceased to refuse its assent to bills passed by Parliament, Anne being the last sovereign who exercised this right.

We must beware, however, of two mistakes in tracing the history of cabinet government. In the first place, we must not antedate its full development. In the eighteenth century, for instance, the leader of the ministry <sup>Slowness of its development.</sup> would have repudiated the title of Prime Minister owing to its unpopularity. Members of a cabinet not infrequently gave individual and contradictory advice to the king and seldom retired from office at the same time. Moreover, the Crown was still a very great force and still a real factor in the administration of the country; indeed, it might be said that the ministers of the eighteenth century had to serve two masters—the Crown and a majority of the House of Commons. And when there was no disciplined or organized party, as happened especially in George III's reign, the monarchy counted for a great deal in politics.

In the second place, it must not be imagined that the power which the Crown lost was gained by the people, that monarchy gave way to democracy. Britain in the eighteenth century, it has been said, was ruled by a "Venetian <sup>Power of the aristocracy.</sup> oligarchy". It was an oligarchy not, indeed, as exclusive, but almost as omnipotent, as in that famous republic, although its power was based, not, as in Venice, on the wealth derived from commerce, but mainly on the power derived from the possession of large landed estates. Educated at one of the large public schools, intermarrying with one another, meeting each other constantly in the small and exclusive society of the London of that day, a few family clans composed in the main the governing classes of the period. The leaders of such families as the Pelhams, the Russells, and the Cavendishes were found constantly in the higher, and their relatives in the lower posts of each Government. In one cabinet half the members were dukes, and in another there was only one commoner. This landowning oligarchy not only at times "encircled and enchained the throne",



but to a large extent dominated the House of Lords, and possessed enormous influence in the House of Commons.

The House of Commons was, up till the passing of the Reform Bill in 1832, a very undemocratic body. The representation was most unequal; Cornwall, for instance, because it was a royal duchy, and therefore subject to the Crown influence, returned as many members as the whole of Scotland. In the English and Welsh counties the franchise was limited to freeholders, namely, those who owned their own land—not, of course, a large number. In the English and Welsh boroughs the franchise was confined to members of the corporation; in the city of Bath, for instance, the number of voters was only thirty-five. Moreover, whilst towns becoming so important as Manchester or Birmingham had no representatives at all, there were a great many small and insignificant boroughs, with a very few voters, which returned one and sometimes two members. Many of these boroughs were either “rotten” or “pocket” boroughs. A “rotten” borough was generally sold to the highest bidder, very often some rich merchant.<sup>1</sup> A “pocket” borough belonged to an individual, generally a neighbouring landowner, who nominated a member to represent it. In the middle of the eighteenth century it was said that no less than fifty members of the House of Commons owed, in some measure, their seats to the influence of the Duke of Newcastle, whilst, a little later, Sir James Lowther (Lord Lonsdale) practically nominated nine members, known as “Sir James’s Ninepins”, who had to vote as he directed.<sup>2</sup>

In Scotland the electoral system was just as unrepresentative. The county of Bute possessed but twelve voters, whilst in the burghs the elections were controlled by a few individuals. Just before the Reform Bill of 1832 it was reckoned that with a population of over two and a quarter millions Scotland had only three thousand electors, and it was said that more votes were

<sup>1</sup> In 1730 the price for the lifetime of a single parliament was £1500; in 1830, £7000.

<sup>2</sup> About the time of the accession of George III, the number of members representing English constituencies was 489. Of these 80 represented the counties and were almost entirely the landed gentry. Of members representing boroughs, the election of 32 was controlled by the Government, and of just on 200 by some 100 patrons. Of the other 180 members, many had bought their seats or had the seats bought for them.



cast at a single by-election in Westminster than in a Scottish general election. Moreover, the ministers responsible for Scottish affairs had an enormous influence, which they exercised to secure members favourable to the Government in power.<sup>1</sup>

Politics were regarded as a lucrative profession, and a minister in the eighteenth century might expect to be able to endow his relatives and supporters with desirable offices, which combined a small amount of work with a large amount of remuneration.<sup>2</sup> Loyalty to a party or a minister was generously rewarded; in George III's reign, for instance, no less than three hundred and eighty-eight peerages were created, most of them for political services. There were many places and pensions, and a large number of members had either one or the other.<sup>3</sup> But this was all part of the political system of that day. The direct bribery of members of Parliament, however, to obtain their votes on a particular occasion was rare; and owing largely to the influence of such statesmen as the elder, and to a lesser extent the younger Pitt, and to a bill passed at the end of the century which reduced the number of places and pensions, the standard of political morality was steadily improved. And by no means all politicians found politics remunerative: the Duke of Newcastle was in public life for nearly fifty years, and found himself at the end of it some £300,000 the poorer as a consequence.

Corruption in politics.

The political system in existence between 1714 and 1832, did, as a matter of fact, produce many statesmen of distinguished ability, who guided Great Britain on the whole very successfully

<sup>1</sup> Thus the Duke of Argyll and his brother were supreme during part of Walpole's ministry, and Henry Dundas during Pitt's rule (1783-1801) had such authority that he was known as Harry the Ninth, and practically all the Scottish members were his supporters.

<sup>2</sup> Thus Horace Walpole, the letter writer, was the third son of Robert Walpole, the Prime Minister. Whilst still a boy at Eton his father gave him the offices of Clerk of the Estreats and Comptroller of the Pipe, which produced about £300 per annum. At the age of twenty he became Usher of the Exchequer, which was worth from £1000 to £1500 a year. His duties were not exacting; they were "to furnish papers, pens, ink, wax, sand, tape, penknives, scissors, and parchment to the Exchequer and Treasury, and to pay the bills of the workmen and tradesmen who serve these offices". On his father's death, Walpole received in addition £1000 a year from the collector's place in the custom house. All these offices Walpole held for the rest of his life. Of his two brothers, one held the lucrative office of Auditor of the Exchequer, and the other was Clerk of the Pells.

<sup>3</sup> In the Parliament elected in 1761, it is estimated, there were 50 ministers and civil servants, 50 court officials, 50 holders of sinecures, 37 Government contractors, and 10 holders of secret service pensions.



through very difficult times. Many of our greatest statesmen, including Walpole, Canning, Fox, the two Pitts, Gladstone, and Palmerston, began their political career as representatives of "pocket" boroughs. Of course it is quite true that the House of Commons was not acutely sensitive to public opinion and did not readily reflect every change in the nation's ideas. But if the nation really felt strongly about anything, its feelings would in the end prevail in the House. And in some ways the system was good, for it gave the House a stability and the member an independence which were valuable. And though the landed classes had the chief, it must not be supposed that they had the sole power, or that the professions and trade and industry were not represented; on the contrary, lawyers and merchants, naval and army officers, civil servants and diplomats were present in the House of Commons and helped to make it a real microcosm of the nation.<sup>1</sup>

The accession of the House of Hanover meant not only the development of Cabinet Government, but for some fifty years the predominance of the Whig Party or Whig groups. The Tories were tainted with Jacobitism, and the Whigs therefore remained in secure possession of the government. But with the accession of George III in 1760 there gradually came a change. By degrees the Tories became reconciled to the Hanoverian dynasty, and their views on preserving the monarchical power coincided with those of the king. Then for some sixty years, from 1770-1830, the ministries were mainly Tory, fear of the French Revolution of 1789 leading many Whigs to join the Tory ranks. But it is difficult in the second half of the eighteenth century to get any clear-cut divisions between the various political parties and groups and their respective views. Lord North, for instance, who came into office in 1770 for twelve years, and whose ministry is generally regarded as Tory, called himself a Whig; whilst it is difficult to fit Chatham into any political category whatever.

<sup>1</sup> In the Parliament elected in 1761, 169 members were Irish peers or the sons of peers, and 101 were baronets or the sons of baronets. There were 50 merchants, 40 practising lawyers, 22 naval officers, 59 army officers, 7 civil servants, and 5 diplomats.



## 2. The Risings of 1715 and 1745 in Scotland

Something must now be said about the details of the history during the period comprised by the reigns of *George I* (1714-27) and of *George II* (1727-60). "Soul extinct; stomach well alive" is the verdict of one distinguished historian on this epoch. Indeed, it cannot, except towards its close, be called an inspiring one. In politics there was a good deal of corruption, and no great principle to ennoble the strife between the party factions. In religion, the Church of England, it has been said, slept and rotted in peace, and its leaders—the bishops—were in some cases hardly Christians. The poetry was of the artificial, epigrammatic character, of which Pope was such a master. A period of peace was followed by a period of war, in which for a time many of our soldiers and seamen showed conspicuous incapacity. Nevertheless, it was a period of growing toleration in matters of religion, and of growing common sense in the affairs of the world; the country grew prosperous, and trade and industry increased; and the nation obtained, for the first half of this epoch, what perhaps it most needed at that time—an interval of repose.

Character  
of period  
1714-60.

Such a period was not one in which men would be prepared to lead forlorn hopes in support of lost causes. Though Tory squires and Oxford undergraduates might still continue to toast the Stuarts,<sup>1</sup> the mass of the nation <sup>The</sup> 'Fifteen' quietly acquiesced in the Hanoverian succession. Only in Scotland, and especially in the Highlands, was active devotion shown to the House of Stuart, and Scotland was the centre of the two rebellions which took place. The first rising was in 1715, and is known, from the name of its leader, as *Mar's Rebellion*. There were to be risings in the Highlands under the Earl of Mar himself, and in the Lowlands of Scotland; in Cumberland, under a Mr. Forster; and in the west of England, where the Duke of Ormonde was to land. But the rising in the west came to nothing. The two Scottish forces should have combined for a

<sup>1</sup> Under such disguises as Job, standing for James III (the Old Pretender), Ormonde, and Bolingbroke; or *Æ3*, *142*, *54*, which denoted James III and the two foreign kings who were expected to assist him, Louis XIV of France and Philip V of Spain.



joint attack upon Stirling, which commanded the communications of Highlands and Lowlands; but the Lowlanders went south instead of north, and along with the men of Cumberland were taken prisoners at Preston. On the same day Mar met the Hanoverian army at *Sheriffmuir*, and though the battle was indecisive, the right wing of each army soundly defeating the wing opposed to it, Government troops 'blocked the road to Edinburgh, and the rebellion fizzled out.

The causes of the failure of the rising were many. To begin with, its leaders were incompetent, and no one had much faith in Mar, "bobbing John" as he was called. The Old Pretender<sup>1</sup> did indeed land in Scotland, but not till after Sheriffmuir had been fought, and not only did he bring neither men nor money with him, but he also proved a very dispiriting and frigid leader. Moreover, Louis XIV had just died, and the Regent Orleans, who governed during the childhood of Louis XV, wished to keep on good terms with Great Britain. Consequently no help came from France. Finally, the Whig Government dealt energetically with the situation.

In 1719 a small Spanish force under the Earl Marischal landed in Scotland and was joined by about a thousand clansmen led by the Marquis of Tullibardine. Government troops, however, defeated and scattered them at Glenshiel.

The third rising in 1745 was a more formidable affair than either of the preceding attempts, though in the interval between 1719 and 1745 Jacobitism had become almost entirely a Scottish movement. This rising took place during the War of the Austrian Succession soon after the battle of Fontenoy (p. 463), where Great Britain had lost great numbers of her bravest troops. The hero of the '45 was Charles Edward, the son of the Old Pretender, whose daring and attractive personality well fitted him to lead the Highlanders to victory. Though France had refused to give him any help, he was determined to win back the throne of his fathers, and in July he landed at Moidart in the north-west of Scotland with only seven men. Some of the

<sup>1</sup> The Old Pretender, or the Chevalier de St. George as he is called, left Scotland in less than six weeks. Subsequently he married a granddaughter of the King of Poland, his two sons being Charles Edward (d. 1788) and the Cardinal of York (d. 1807). He himself died in 1766, and in 1819 George III erected a monument to his memory in St. Peter's at Rome.



Highland chieftains knew well the folly of his attempt, and Lochiel and Macdonald of Boisdale tried to dissuade him. But he would not listen to them, and, seeing his determination, they decided to give him their support. Some other clans joined in, and Charles marched south. Cope, the opposing general, came north from Edinburgh to meet him, but made a tactical error, and Charles, who had been joined by a very capable officer, Lord George Murray,<sup>1</sup> entered Edinburgh unopposed and advanced to meet Cope, who had returned by sea, at *Prestonpans*. Crossing by night a marsh which was supposed to be impassable, Prince Charles at daylight found himself within two hundred yards of the enemy; and his Highlanders, charging successively the artillery, the cavalry, and the infantry, won a decisive victory in under ten minutes (September). "They ran like rabbits", wrote the Prince of the enemy (the spelling is his own); "not a single bayonet was blood-stained".<sup>2</sup> Scotland seemed to be at his feet.

General Wade, meanwhile, had been sent north to Newcastle with ten battalions (seven of which were composed of foreigners) to prevent an invasion of England. Prince Charles, against the advice of his ablest advisers, advanced south, then suddenly—to avoid Wade—swerved west, entered England by Carlisle, took Manchester, and reached Derby—within one hundred and twenty-five miles of London. Whether he ought to have advanced farther will always be a matter for dispute. Had he but known that Newcastle, one of the chief ministers of the day, was restlessly pacing his room in an agony of doubt as to whether to join the Pretender or not, that George II himself had made all preparations to retire to Hanover, and that people were rushing in wild panic to get their money from the bank, he might have proceeded. As it was, Prudence in the person of Lord George Murray said "No"; for Wade was with one army in the north, Cumberland with another in the Midlands, and yet another lay near London, whilst the Prince's own army was dwindling and recruits were not coming in. The Scottish Lowlands, which had gained much from the Union, were apathetic

<sup>1</sup> He had a son at Eton who was very anxious to fight for King George.

<sup>2</sup> The Highlanders were delighted; they had, they said, a prince "who could eat a dry crust, sleep on pease-straw, eat his dinner in four minutes, and win a battle in five".



where he had expected enthusiasm, and the north of England had "given him not the least encouragement". Consequently Prince Charles, against his own wishes and in very bad grace, retreated; and when he had once begun, he could not stop.

The rebellion henceforward became, as a contemporary said, "a rebellion on the defensive", and was bound to fail. Prince Charles, however, reached Scotland safely, and won a victory at *Falkirk* (January, 1746). The Duke of Cumberland was then appointed to the chief command in Scotland, and <sup>Suppression of rising.</sup> showed a great energy in drilling his troops, and in teaching them to meet a Highland charge. Whilst the men in the rear rank were to fire volleys, those in the front rank were to kneel with bayonets fixed, and each man was to thrust at the Highlander on his right front, the right being the Highlander's unprotected side. After a clever winter campaign in a mountainous country, Cumberland met Prince Charles at *Culloden*, near Inverness, and won a complete victory (April, 1746), though he obtained the horrible appellation of "Butcher", from the cruelty which he showed after the battle.

After the rebellion was over, many Scotsmen were executed. Prince Charles himself, with £30,000 on his head, after wandering for five months amongst the moorlands and mountains and islands of the west, was, through the heroism of Flora Macdonald, able to effect his escape, and eventually died in 1788.<sup>1</sup> The British Parliament passed a stringent Disarming Act. Parliament also abolished the hereditary jurisdiction of the Highland chiefs—many of whom had taken part in the insurrection—and tried, though without success, to abolish the national dress. With the failure of the rising, the hopes of the Jacobites were for ever crushed. Before long the Highlanders were to show on many a battlefield the same splendid loyalty to the House of Hanover as they had shown to the House of Stuart, for Pitt during the Seven Years' War formed two Scottish regiments, which did magnificent service, especially on the "Heights of Abraham".

<sup>1</sup> Through Flora Macdonald's help he escaped to Skye disguised as an Irish spinning-maid, and subsequently got safely to France. In 1750 he revisited England, of course disguised, and "in the new church in the Strand" made a Declaration of his Protestantism, hoping thereby to gain additional support.



### 3. The Two Kings and their Whig Ministers

Something must now be said about the two kings, *George I and George II*, who ruled respectively from 1714-27, and from 1727-60. They cannot be considered very attractive monarchs. A contemporary said of George I that "he <sup>George I, 1714-27, and George II, 1727-60.</sup> had no notion of what was princely"; whilst George II was somewhat coarse, occasionally irritable, and not over-generous—he only made one present to Walpole, who was his minister for fifteen years, and that was a diamond with a flaw in it. Neither of the two kings was interested in science, art, or literature.<sup>1</sup> Both of them quarrelled with their eldest sons.<sup>2</sup> But whilst George I quarrelled also with his wife and kept her in prison for over thirty years, George II was very much attached to Queen Caroline (she died in 1737), who was indeed a remarkable woman, keenly interested in the philosophy and literature of her time, and exercising considerable influence upon politics.

Both George I and George II, however, possessed characteristics which should have appealed to their new subjects. They were keen soldiers. George I began his fighting career at the age of fifteen, and commanded the forces of the Empire for a short period during the War of the Spanish Succession, whilst George II led a great cavalry charge at Oudenarde, and, donning the same old uniform thirty-five years later, fought like a lion at Dettingen. Both kings were veracious and trustworthy, loyal to their friends and not vindictive to their opponents. Moreover, it is very greatly to their credit that, though they were absolute rulers in Hanover, they never overstepped the constitutional limits imposed upon them in Great Britain, and they had the good sense to rely for counsel in British affairs upon their British advisers and

<sup>1</sup> There is a story that George I, when congratulated by some courtier on becoming King of England, said: "Rather congratulate me in having Newton for a subject in one country and Leibnitz in the other." But the story lacks confirmation, and there is no reason to suppose that George I realized the greatness either of the discoverer of the law of gravitation or of the inventor of the differential calculus.

<sup>2</sup> George I was so much displeased with his son, the future George II, that he appears to have entertained a suggestion that the son should be seized and sent to America, "where he should never be heard of more"; for Queen Caroline, George II's wife, found in George I's cabinet after his death a letter from the First Lord of the Admiralty containing this proposal.



not upon any German ministers or favourites. It was hardly to be expected that George I, who came to the throne at the age of fifty-four and did not know a word of English, should understand or care for British politics; he spent half his time in Hanover, and his influence in Great Britain was small. George II, though also devoted to Hanover, knew more of Great Britain, and, as he possessed shrewdness and common sense, was a factor of considerable importance in domestic affairs.

We must now turn to home politics. The accession of George I, in 1714, made the Whigs supreme. The Tories were tainted with

The Whig  
Government,  
1714-20.

Jacobite sympathies, and for forty-five years—till after the accession of George III—the Whigs remained in secure possession of the Government. The immense Whig majority that was returned to the first Parliament of George I showed considerable energy. It repealed the more intolerant Acts—such as the Occasional Conformity and Schism Acts—passed in the Tory Parliament of Anne. It impeached the Tory leaders, including Harley. Fearful, after Mar's rising was suppressed, that a new Parliament might return a Tory majority, it proceeded to prolong its own existence by passing—somewhat unconstitutionally—the *Septennial Act* (1716), which allowed this and succeeding Parliaments to sit for seven years. The life of a Parliament was till 1911 subject to this Act, and this limit is undoubtedly better than that of three years which had been imposed in the reign of William III. Meanwhile the four leaders in the Whig ministry had quarrelled; and in 1717 two of them, Townshend and Walpole, resigned, leaving Sunderland, the son-in-law of Marlborough, and Stanhope, the conqueror of Minorca, supreme. The rule of the two latter, however, was to come to an abrupt conclusion in 1720.

A company had been formed in 1711 to secure the trade of the South Seas. It had prospered, and in 1719 it offered to take over the National Debt, that is to say, to become the sole creditor of the Government, and to buy out, either by cash or by shares in the Company, all other creditors. The Company proposed to pay £7,000,000 for this privilege—for as such it was regarded—and to reduce the interest which the nation was paying. The Government accepted the offer, and the

The  
South Sea  
Bubble.



more willingly as the Company had paid considerable bribes to the less honest of its members. The directors of the Company thought that the close connection with the Government which would result from the Company being its sole creditor would be a gigantic advertisement and inspire confidence. And so it proved. Everyone, including philosophers and clergymen, and even in its corporate capacity the Canton of Berne, began to buy shares in the Company. The £100 shares went up by bounds and reached £1000. There followed a craze of speculation. Numerous companies were formed, none too foolish to lack subscribers.<sup>1</sup> And then came the reaction, and the bubble burst. People began to realize that the South Sea Company's shares could not possibly be worth what had been paid for them, and tried to get rid of them. Consequently the shares fell even quicker than they had risen, and hundreds of people who had bought when the stock was high lost their fortunes.

At once there was a cry for vengeance. It was seriously proposed to tie the directors up in sacks and throw them into the Thames. Revelations regarding the bribes to the ministers came out, and the Government was Fall of the ministry, 1720. ruined. Of the two leaders, Sunderland resigned, and Stanhope, who was honest, had a fit when an unjust charge of corruption was brought against him, and died. Of the other ministers, one committed suicide, another was sent to the Tower, whilst the smallpox accounted for a third. The way was thus left open for Walpole, who had not been officially connected with the South Sea Company's transactions, though he had made a profit of 1000 per cent by judicious buying and selling of its shares on his own private account.

✓ *Robert Walpole* was a typical product of his time. By birth a Norfolk squire, and educated at Eton, he was a cheerful, good-natured, tolerant person, and a keen sportsman, who, Character of Walpole. it was said, always opened the letters from his game-keeper first, however important his other correspondence might be.<sup>2</sup> He was a man of considerable common sense, and a pro-

<sup>1</sup> One financier brought out a company to promote "a certain design which will hereafter be promulgated"; and even this company did not lack subscribers.

<sup>2</sup> Parliament owes its Saturday holiday to the fact that Walpole on that day used always



digiously hard worker. He never appeared to be in a hurry, and he had the invaluable faculty of forgetting his worries. "I throw off my cares," he said, "when I throw off my clothes." As he said, however, of himself, he was no saint, no reformer, no Spartan. A cynical, coarse person, he lacked all enthusiasms. With him there was no ideal for his country to seek to attain in external affairs, no passion to lessen the sum of human misery at home. Such a statesman may make a nation prosperous, but he can never make a nation great. It was fortunate for Great Britain that, after she had waxed fat under a Walpole, she had a Pitt to inspire her to action.

The twenty-one years of Walpole's administration, from 1721-42, contain, it has been said, no history. We have seen how in foreign affairs Walpole maintained till near the close of his ministry a policy of peace, which was very beneficial to England. In domestic affairs little happens.

In our financial history, however, Walpole's rule was very important. Walpole undoubtedly was a great financier. He restored credit after the South Sea panic. He found, it is said, our tariff to be the worst in Europe; and by abolishing duties on a great number of articles he made it the best. In all the details of financial administration he was excellent; if he could not, as George I said he could, make gold out of nothing, he could make it go a long way.

Walpole's administration, again, marks a stage in the evolution of cabinet government. Walpole has been called our first prime minister, because he practically appointed all his colleagues, and insisted that they should have the same opinions as himself. He, however, was no believer in cabinet councils, and preferred to discuss public affairs with two or three of his colleagues at the more convivial and less controversial dinner table. But if a minister differed from him he had to go—either to govern Ireland like Carteret

to hunt with his beagles at Richmond. Pope, the great friend of Walpole's chief opponents, has borne witness to his social qualities:

"Seen him I have; but in his happier hour  
Of social pleasure ill exchanged for power:  
Seen him uncumbered with the venal tribe,  
Smile without art and win without a bribe".



(1724); or to be the first leader of an organized Opposition like Pulteney (1725), whose tongue Walpole feared, it was said, more than another man's sword; or to grow turnips like Townshend (1730), the brother-in-law and Norfolk neighbour of Walpole.

## Walpole and the Opposition.

### The Excise Bill, 1733.

<sup>1</sup> The first number of *The Craftsman* appeared at the end of 1726, and the last number in 1736. It was published at first twice and then once a week, and amongst its contributors, besides Bolingbroke himself, were Swift, Pulteney, Pope, and Arbuthnot.

<sup>2</sup> Queen Caroline on one occasion succeeded in convincing the king with arguments Walpole had used to her, though unconvinced by them herself. She had great influence over the king, of the old couplet:

**"You may strut, dapper George, but 't will all be in vain;  
We know 't is Queen Caroline, not you, that reign".**



Three years after the withdrawal of the Excise Bill, Walpole's Government became very unpopular in Scotland. As a result of the Union of 1707, the customs duties in that country had been increased so as to tally with those in England, and consequently many Scots thought themselves justified in eluding them. Smuggling was therefore regarded with an indulgent eye in Scotland, and was so general as to be almost one of its minor industries. In 1736 two notorious smugglers, who had robbed a custom-house officer, were convicted and ordered to be executed in Edinburgh. One of them made himself a popular hero by chivalrously aiding the escape of the other,<sup>2</sup> and there was consequently a huge and sympathetic crowd

<sup>1</sup> Even Samuel Johnson, some twenty years after, so far forgot the impartiality of a lexicographer as thus to define the word "excise" in his Dictionary: "a hateful tax levied upon commodities, and adjudged not by common judges of property, but by wretches hired by those to whom excise is paid".

<sup>2</sup>The two prisoners had planned to escape from prison by enlarging the window in their



at his execution. The execution over, there was some disorder, and stones were thrown at the town guard. Its commander, Captain Porteous, gave orders for the guard to fire, and some people were killed. Popular fury was aroused. Captain Porteous was tried and condemned to death. But he was reprieved by the Government, and the mob then took matters into its own hands and hanged him on a dyer's pole.<sup>1</sup> Walpole's Government accordingly tried to pass a Bill punishing the city of Edinburgh, but its terms were so stringent that they were opposed by all the Scottish members and had to be considerably modified. Walpole's position in Scotland was further weakened by the defection of the Duke of Argyll, who had enormous influence; consequently in the new Parliament of 1741 only six Scottish members supported Walpole.

Meanwhile Queen Caroline's death in 1737 had deprived Walpole of his chief ally, whilst in the same year the Prince of Wales joined the Opposition. Finally, the Opposition forced on the war with Spain in 1739 (p. 461), Fall of Walpole, 1742. and Walpole's mismanagement of it helped to secure his defeat and resignation, in 1742. Walpole's rule had not been an inspiring one. But his policy of peace abroad and inactivity at home had two results: it made the Hanoverian dynasty secure, and it gave the country a breathing space which enabled her to endure the exertions demanded during the later wars of the century. Moreover, Walpole's strong, clear common sense had been of great value in matters of practical administration, whilst his financial ability had done much, and would, but for a factious opposition, have done more to develop the prosperity and trade of the country.

To Walpole succeeded a ministry whose most prominent member was *Carteret*, and whose activity was chiefly shown in the War of the Austrian Succession; and to that The Pelham ministry, 1744-54. another ministry commonly called the "*Broad-bottomed administration*", consisting of nearly all the chief Whigs

cell. One of them, however, stuck in the aperture, and not only was unable to get out himself but prevented the egress of the other. But, on the following Sunday, he attacked the guard at the close of divine service, and endeavoured to escape. He failed, but prolonged his struggles to distract the attention of the guards, thus enabling his fellow-prisoner to get away.

<sup>1</sup> See Scott's *Heart of Midlothian* for full account of the Porteous Riots.



under *Henry Pelham* and his brother, the Duke of Newcastle. That ministry, which lasted from 1744 to 1754, continued and ended the War of the Austrian Succession, and suppressed the Rebellion of 1745, and in home affairs pursued Walpole's quiescent policy. Only one matter of interest need be mentioned, and that was the reform of the calendar. Hitherto in Great Britain the old Roman calendar had been used, and not the corrected calendar adopted first by Gregory XIII in 1582, and subsequently by nearly all European nations. The old calendar was several days wrong, and the ministry, in order to rectify it, omitted some days in September, 1752, calling the 3rd of September the 14th. Great irritation was aroused by this change, many people thinking that they had been defrauded by the Government of these days; hence came the popular cry, "Give us back our eleven days". Another change was made at the same time, and the legal year in future was to begin on January 1st, and not, as heretofore, on March 25th.<sup>1</sup>

On Pelham's death, in 1754, the *Duke of Newcastle* succeeded as prime minister. He was a man of vast incompetence, always in a hurry and bustle and never doing anything. He has been described as a "hubble-bubble" man, his manner and speech resembling the bubbling of a Turkish pipe.<sup>2</sup> But his personal influence over various "pocket" boroughs returning members to the House of Commons, and his vast fortune spent in securing others, gave him a position which enabled him to be in high office almost continuously for over forty years. He and his ministry were so incapable that they could not survive the beginning of the Seven Years' War (1756). The

<sup>1</sup> The most permanent monument of Pelham's administration was the foundation of the British Museum in 1753, but all that can be said to Pelham's credit is that "he was not unfriendly to the scheme". The money for it was raised by means of a lottery.

<sup>2</sup> Newcastle was for a long time responsible for the administration of the American colonies, and two stories are told of his ignorance in that capacity. After being minister for many years someone told him that Cape Breton was an island and was not on the mainland, and he exclaimed delightedly: "Cape Breton an island! Wonderful!—show it me in the map. So it is, sure enough. My dear sir, you always bring us good news. I must go and tell the king that Cape Breton is an island." On another occasion a general suggested that some defence was necessary for Annapolis; on which Newcastle, with his "evasive lisping hurry", replied: "Annapolis, Annapolis! Oh! yes, Annapolis must be defended; to be sure, Annapolis should be defended—pray, where is Annapolis?"



ministry which succeeded, however, found itself powerless without Newcastle's influence. Fortunately *Pitt and Newcastle* then combined in the summer of 1757 to form a ministry, Newcastle managing the patronage and business details whilst Pitt was left to conduct the great war with which his name will be for ever connected. But before Pitt and Newcastle could bring the Seven Years' War to a conclusion, the death of George II, in 1760, changed the aspect of domestic politics, and the Whig ascendancy was, for the first time since 1714, seriously threatened.

Pitt and  
Newcastle.  
1757-61.

#### 4. Pitt and Wesley

In the early Hanoverian period, the nation, it has been said, had sunk into a condition of moral apathy rarely paralleled in our history. It was due, above all others, to two men, William Pitt and John Wesley, that Great Britain, towards the middle of the century, was roused from her torpor, and of these two men and their influence something must now be said. Pitt, after an education at Eton, went into the cavalry. He entered Parliament in 1735. He became an opponent, first as leader of "the Boys", of Walpole's corruption, and secondly, of Carteret's continental foreign policy; and the violent expression of his views was so congenial to the old Duchess of Marlborough that she left him a legacy of £10,000. Subsequently he had become paymaster of the forces in Pelham's administration, but had refused to take the enormous perquisites which had hitherto been connected with that office. From 1757 to 1761 Pitt was the real ruler of Great Britain. No doubt he was inconsistent, and in youth when in opposition attacked measures which he subsequently supported when in power. He has been described, and not without truth, as something of a charlatan. He loved ostentation and lacked simplicity. He was always something of an actor, and even for the most unimportant interviews his crutch and his sling (for he was a martyr to gout) were most carefully arranged.<sup>1</sup> And it must be admitted that his con-

Character and  
influence of  
Pitt.

<sup>1</sup> Pitt was very fond of reading aloud the tragedies of Shakespeare to his family, but, whenever he came to any light or comic parts, he used to give the book to someone else to read. "This anecdote", says a distinguished historian, "is characteristic of his whole life. He never unbent. He was always acting a part, always self-conscious, always aiming at a false and unreal dignity."



duct to other ministers was overbearing and at times almost intolerable.

But Pitt was a great man. As an orator he was superb. "His words", wrote one contemporary, "have sometimes frozen my young blood into stagnation and sometimes made it pace in such a hurry through my veins that I could scarce support it." Another said that you might as soon expect a "No" from an old maid as from the House of Commons when Pitt was in the height of his power.<sup>1</sup> Absolutely incorruptible himself, he and his son, the younger Pitt, did more than any other two men to raise the standard of English public life. Quite fearless, he had the courage to stand up for unpopular causes—as in the case of Byng—when he saw an injustice was being done. It was of course as a war minister that he was greatest, and of Pitt in that capacity something has already been said. But Pitt was one of those rare statesmen who had great views in all things. Unfortunately for Great Britain he only held high office from 1757 to 1761, and again for a brief period from 1766 to 1767. If he could have stayed in office longer, Ireland might have been pacified, America might not have been lost, our Indian Empire might have been at an earlier date organized, and parliamentary reform sooner accomplished. For not only had he great views himself, but like a prophet of old he could inspire a nation to noble deeds and high thoughts.

*John Wesley's* influence in the religious life of the nation was similar to that exercised by Pitt in the political life. Wesley had been educated at Charterhouse and Oxford. After taking orders, he returned to Oxford as a Fellow in 1729, and for the next six years was the leader of a small society for mutual improvement, the members of which, including his brother Charles, the famous hymn writer, and

<sup>1</sup> Many stories illustrate the extraordinary power Pitt possessed over the House of Commons. On one occasion a member who was attempting to answer Pitt was overcome either by Pitt's glance or a few words which he spoke, and sat down in fear and confusion. Someone afterwards asked a person who was present "whether the House did not laugh at the ridiculous figure of the poor member". "No, sir," he replied, "we were all too much awed to laugh." On another occasion Pitt began a speech with the words "Sugar, Mr. Speaker". The combination of Pitt's somewhat theatrical gestures and appearance with such simple words as these caused some members to laugh. Pitt turned round on these members, repeated the word "sugar" three times, and then said, "Who will now dare to laugh at sugar?" And the members sank, we are told, into abashed silence.



George Whitefield, were known in the University by the nickname of Methodists. Subsequently Wesley was a minister for two years in Georgia, the newly founded colony in America. On his return to England he began the work which has made him so famous. In 1739 he built the first of his chapels at Bristol, and formed the first of his regular Methodist societies in London. Above all, the year 1739 saw the system of open-air preaching adopted which was to carry the message of the gospel to hundreds of thousands of people.

The activity shown by John Wesley and his colleagues, Charles Wesley and Whitefield, was astonishing. Of the three, Whitefield was probably the greatest preacher, and he, during the thirty-four years of his ministry, is said to have preached on the average ten sermons a week to audiences numbering sometimes as many as thirty thousand.<sup>1</sup> His record, however, is surpassed by that of John Wesley, who, in the half century preceding his death in 1791, is estimated to have delivered forty thousand sermons, and to have travelled a quarter of a million of miles, the greater part of it on horseback. Their preaching affected all classes—the miners of Cornwall, the soldiers in the army, the negroes in Georgia, as well as a section of fashionable society in London. Nor was the activity of the three confined to England and Wales, for the whole world was their parish. Whitefield made over twelve journeys across the Atlantic, and Wesley had a missionary tour in Scotland when over eighty years of age.

Throughout his life Wesley remained a member of the Church of England. But gradually the movement which he initiated became independent of that Church. His doctrines concerning sin and conversion were disliked by many in the Anglican Church. The chapels

Activity of the  
Methodists.

Methodism and  
the Church of  
England.

<sup>1</sup> No popular preacher has probably ever had such influence as Whitefield. He had a voice which could be heard by thirty thousand people in the open air, but which was managed with such skill that he could pronounce, a contemporary said, an unpromising word like Mesopotamia in a way to produce tears from his audience. Of his powers of vivid description many stories are related. Even such a pattern of propriety and aristocratic conduct as Lord Chesterfield, when Whitefield was relating the story of a blind man deserted by his dog and losing his way on a dangerous moor, lost all self-control, and bounded out of his seat as the blind man neared a precipice, exclaiming, "Good God! he's gone!" One of Whitefield's admirers held that a sermon of his would only reach its highest perfection at the fortieth repetition.







## Summary of History During Reign of George III (1760-1820)

The reign of *George III* (1760-1820) may be divided chronologically into three periods: first, 1760-83 to the end of the American War of Independence; second, 1783-1802 to the end of the Revolutionary War, a period during nearly the whole of which the younger Pitt was Prime Minister; third, 1803-20, when occurred the struggle against Napoleon and the subsequent years of distress.

The *First* of these periods (1760-83) sees the end of the Seven Years War in 1763, and the Treaty of Paris by which Great Britain obtained Canada (pp. 475-7). Then followed the series of events beginning with the Stamp Act in 1765, which caused the American War of Independence (1775-83); after three years France, and, later still, Spain and Holland combined in the war against Great Britain, and finally the latter had to recognize the independence of the Colonies (Ch. XXXVII). The war had great influence upon the relations between Great Britain and Ireland, and enabled the Irish, under Grattan's leadership, to secure the independence of their Parliament and the abolition of the restrictions upon their trade (pp. 578-9). In India this period saw the reforms of Clive during his third visit to India (1765-7), and the government of Warren Hastings from 1774-85 (pp. 512-15); whilst Cook's first voyage to Australia in 1768 was the prelude to the colonization of that vast continent (p. 519). In home politics these years are interesting for the attempts of the king to recover, from the Whig oligarchy, some of the lost power of the Crown, an attempt which was successful during the ministry of Lord North (1769-82), the king being really his own Prime Minister (pp. 560-6). During this period also came some of the chief inventions and discoveries of the Industrial Revolution, including the "Spinning Jenny" and the Steam Engine (pp. 586-7); whilst in 1776 came the publication of Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* (p. 570).

The *Second* of the three periods (1783-1802) saw the long ministry of the younger Pitt (1783-1801), the first ten years of which were years of peace and financial reform (pp. 569-71). The later years were occupied with the war of the French Revolution (1793-1802), a war caused chiefly by the aggressiveness of France and her desire to spread her doctrines over Europe as a consequence of her Revolution, which began in 1789. At sea Great Britain had many of her most brilliant successes, but the war was, so far as Great Britain was concerned, somewhat unsuccessful on land, except at the close, in Egypt and in



India, where, during Lord Wellesley's rule (1798-1805), important victories were won (Ch. XXXIX, and for India pp. 516-18). Mean-time, fear of the French doctrines spreading to England caused Pitt to pass some severe laws in order to repress any revolutionary movements, and led to the predominance of the Tory and the break-up of the Whig party (pp. 571-2). In Ireland there was much unrest, which finally led to the Rebellion of 1798; Pitt succeeded in passing the Act of Union in 1800, though he failed to overcome the king's opposition to the Roman Catholic claims and consequently resigned (pp. 580-3). During this period many men great in Literature or Art died, such as Samuel Johnson and Burke (p. 567), Gibbon the historian, and the poet Burns; and amongst painters, Reynolds, Gainsborough, and Romney.

The *Third* portion of the reign of George III (1802-20) was mainly occupied with the Napoleonic War (1803-15), which began with Napoleon's attempted invasion of England and the campaign of Trafalgar (1803-5). Then followed Napoleon's series of famous victories and his attempt to strangle British trade; our retaliatory measures finally led to war with the United States in 1814. Wellington's Peninsular Campaign (1809-14) had no small share in bringing about Napoleon's downfall, which eventually came after the Russian campaign of 1812 and the Leipzig campaign of 1813. On Napoleon's escape from Elba occurred the campaign of Waterloo in 1815; and then followed the reconstruction of Europe through the Congress of Vienna and the Treaty of Paris (Ch. XL). The war had been conducted by a series of Tory Ministries (pp. 572-4), and after it was over there was considerable distress which led to many riots (pp. 603-5). The period is an important one in our Imperial history, because of the acquisition of Malta and the Cape of Good Hope (p. 560); and the rule of Lord Wellesley (1798-1805) and of Lord Hastings (1814-23) in India (pp. 512-9); in our Industrial history, amongst other things, for the first steamer and the first locomotive engine (p. 587); in the history of humanity for the abolition of the Slave Trade in 1807 (p. 574), and the first Factory Law in 1802 (p. 596); and in literature, chiefly, perhaps, for the sonnets of Wordsworth and the beginning of Scott's Waverley Novels.

In arrangement, Ch. XXXVII deals with the American War of Independence, Ch. XXXVIII with the relations of Great Britain and India from 1763 to 1823, Ch. XXXIX with the Revolutionary, and Ch. XL with the Napoleonic Wars. Domestic affairs during George III's reign up to 1815 are outlined in Ch. XLI, whilst Ch. XLII attempts a review of Irish history from 1689-1815. The first section of Ch. XLIII describes the "Industrial Revolution" before 1815.

For list of chief dates of period see end of volume.



## XXXVII. Great Britain and North America, 1763-83

We have to deal in this chapter with the causes and course of one of the most important crises in our history—the War of American Independence. Our very success in the Seven Years' War made our position in North America one of peculiar difficulty. "With the triumph of Wolfe on the Heights of Abraham", it is said, "began the history of the United States." The conquest of Canada freed the American colonies from danger of absorption by the French; and by so doing enabled them to stand by themselves and to become independent of the mother country. Moreover, the great expenses that fell, as a consequence of the war, upon the mother country led to an attempt to tax the colonies, which caused both the Puritan democrats of the North and the Anglican, aristocratic, and slave-owning planters of the South to unite for the first time in a common opposition.

*Influence of Seven Years' War on American colonies.*

Up till the end of the Seven Years' War, no other colonies in the world had been so well treated as those in British America. In matters of government, indeed, many of the colonies had in the course of the eighteenth century attained a large measure of self-government. The governor of each colony was generally appointed by the Crown; but the Colonial Assemblies had acquired the right to initiate legislation, and by their control of the finances—and in some colonies of the governor's salary as well—could bend the governors to their will. Great Britain, however, regulated the trade of the colonies—sometimes to her own advantage. Thus the manufacture in America of steel or woollen goods, or even of hats, was limited or forbidden, so as not to compete with British imports.

*Trade restrictions.*

All goods from Europe had first to be landed in Great Britain, and the colonies were also subject to the Navigation Act. Some of the chief colonial products, such as tobacco and cotton, could be exported only to Great Britain. But the colonies had compensations. Many of their products, such as grain and fish and



rum, they could export where they liked. They got the protection of the British Fleet and Army. The colonies in the North were able, owing to the Navigation Acts, to develop their shipping. The inhabitants of Great Britain were only allowed to smoke American tobacco. And the restrictions on American trade were largely evaded by systematic smuggling.

In 1763 *George Grenville* became the chief minister in Great Britain. Four things then occurred which began the trouble. Grenville's First, he found that the revenue from the American policy, 1763-5. customs was only about £2000 a year, and not unnaturally he tried to put some check on the vast amount of smuggling which these small figures indicated—a step strongly resented by the Americans. Secondly, in order to protect the British West Indies, a law had been passed in 1733 putting very heavy duties on molasses or liquid sugar coming to the British North American colonies from the French West Indies, molasses being required, especially in Boston, for the making of rum, and being cheaper in the French than in the British West Indies. Smuggling had made this law ineffective. But now Grenville, though halving the duty on foreign molasses, saw that it was levied, and this increased the colonial irritation. Thirdly, the British Government, anxious to prevent the frauds and abuses which had been formerly committed in obtaining lands from the Indians, issued a Proclamation forming large parts of the land of the colonies into a reserve for the Indians, and forbidding all fresh grants of land by the Red Indians except through the colonial governors appointed by the Crown. This seemed to the colonists to be doing away with their rights of independent and indefinite expansion, and caused great suspicion and resentment. Then, fourthly, Grenville decided that it was necessary for the defence of the American colonies, not only against the French but against the Indian tribes, to keep a small standing army in America.<sup>1</sup> Grenville was not unreasonable in thinking that the colonies themselves should contribute something towards the cost of the army. For the resources of Great Britain were being subjected to a severe test. The Seven

<sup>1</sup> A Red Indian, called Pontiac, had invaded the colonies in 1763, and only with great difficulty, and mainly by British troops, was the invasion repelled. This showed the necessity of keeping a standing army in America.



Years' War had nearly doubled the National Debt. Taxation was heavy and included even taxes on wheels and window panes. Moreover, Britain was threatened by a coalition of France and Spain, countries which were preparing for an attack in the near future.

Nor was Grenville's particular proposal unreasonable. He suggested that the colonies should pay only one-third of the expense of this army by means of an Act under which all legal documents should bear stamps. But he allowed The Stamp Act, 1765.

a year's delay for its discussion, and told the agents of the colonies that, if the colonies would raise the money in any other way, he would be quite content; and only when they failed to suggest any alternative scheme was the *Stamp Act* passed through the British Parliament (1765). Moreover, legally the British Parliament had undoubtedly the right to pass the Stamp Act imposing this taxation on the colonies. But it was natural that a liberty-loving people should object to being taxed by a Parliament in which they were unrepresented, and which belonged to a country three thousand miles away that would lessen its own burdens by the amount of money it could raise from them. "No taxation without representation" has been the watchword of English liberty; and it proved a cry which it was difficult for Englishmen to resist. Moreover, the thin-end-of-the-wedge argument was a strong one; if the colonies acquiesced in this tax, would others not be imposed? Consequently the colonies, already irritated by Grenville's other measures, used the year which he had allowed them not for discussion but for agitation. When the Act was finally passed and came into operation, there were riots, a governor's house was sacked, and stamp collectors burnt in effigy. No one used the stamps; and—most ominous of all—delegates from nine out of the thirteen colonies met together to protest, thus showing an unprecedented unity of purpose.

The opinions of British statesmen differed when news of these proceedings reached England. The king and Grenville were for Great Britain's legal rights. Others, like Burke, thought the Act inexpedient, and were not concerned with its legality. Pitt thought that the British Parliament had no right to impose an internal tax on the colonies, and proclaimed that the Americans would be slaves

Repeal of  
Stamp Act,  
1766.



if they had not resisted. Meanwhile, on Grenville's retirement from office, *Rockingham* succeeded as Prime Minister. Adopting a conciliatory policy, he repealed the Stamp Act, though an Act was passed at the same time declaring that Great Britain had a right to tax the colonies. The Americans were delighted; and all danger of serious trouble seemed to be at an end.

But then came another dispute, due to a brilliant and unreliable man, by name *Townshend*, who was Chancellor of the Exchequer in *Lord Chatham's* ministry. In 1767, at a time when Chatham was totally incapacitated by illness, Townshend *imposed duties on tea, glass, and paper* imported into the American colonies.

Townshend's  
new duties,  
1767, and  
their partial  
abolition, 1769.

He contended that as these were external taxes levied at the ports, and not internal taxes, the colonists could not object. The money derived from these taxes—estimated to bring in some £40,000 a year—was to go to pay the governors and officials whose salaries had hitherto been paid by the Assemblies. This was to cut at the root of colonial self-government and aroused the strongest opposition. Accordingly, in 1770, *Lord North's* ministry—which had come into office in that year, and was to remain in power for the next twelve years—abolished the duties on glass and paper. But, with incredible folly, the duty on tea was retained, in order to assert the right of taxing.

Small incidents are exaggerated when two peoples are irritated with one another, and at this time various occurrences exasperated feeling on both sides. We can only refer to two of them. British regiments had been subjected to various kinds of insult from the townspeople in Boston. Finally a mob surrounded some soldiers, and after calling them "Rascals, lobsters, and bloody backs" (because they were liable to be flogged), proceeded to snowball them. In the confusion a volley was fired, and four people were killed. The affair was magnified into a massacre, even into "the massacre", by the colonists, and great indignation was aroused (1770). The other incident inflamed feeling in Great Britain. One of the king's ships, engaged in repressing smuggling, was boarded one night by some American colonists and burnt (1772), and the perpetrators of this outrage were never punished.

Unfortunate  
incidents,  
1770-3.

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Other events soon afterwards finally brought about war. The East India Company—at that time in great financial difficulties—was allowed to export its tea direct to America without going to Great Britain first; consequently the Company would only have to pay the threepenny duty per pound levied on tea imported into America. The more extreme of the colonists, however, thought this was only a trick of the Government to reconcile the colonists to the tax by cheapening the cost of tea, and consequently when the ships of the Company arrived in *Boston* a number of men disguised as Mohawks boarded, and threw their three hundred and forty chests of tea into the sea (1773).

The Boston  
Tea-party,  
1773.

The British Parliament now acted with severity. An Act was passed modifying the Constitution of Massachusetts, transferring to the Crown the appointment of many of the officials, and prohibiting public meetings except by leave of the Governor; the port of Boston was closed, and thousands were thrown out of work. Gage, a soldier, was made Governor of Massachusetts, and additional troops were sent out. The other colonies, however, supported Massachusetts, and a Congress representing all the colonies except Georgia was held at Philadelphia. This Congress drew up a Declaration of Rights, demanded the repeal of thirteen Acts of Parliament, and initiated a boycott—to use a modern word—of British goods. Lord North then tried conciliation, but it was too late, for the war had already begun with a skirmish at Lexington (1775).

Outbreak of  
war, 1775.

In the next year, on July 4th, 1776, came the famous Declaration of Independence in which the thirteen colonies finally broke their allegiance to Great Britain, though there were many people in the colonies who did not approve of this step. With that Declaration began the independent history of the United States. Whether that independence could have been prevented is doubtful. No doubt the British Government was partly to blame; it was, it might be urged, ignorant and unsympathetic, and its policy was vacillating. No doubt, also, the character of the colonists in the North was, in Pitt's phrase, "umbrageous" (i.e. they took umbrage easily) and quarrelsome, whilst there were extremists amongst the colonists who wished to reduce British control to a vanishing point,



and who, to use Burke's phrase, "were ready to snuff the approach of tyranny in every tainted breeze". But the circumstances were extraordinarily difficult and perhaps no statesmanship at that time could have overcome them. Two points may be noted in conclusion. First, it was only because the colonists were Englishmen with an Englishman's idea of liberty and self-government that they rebelled—no other colonists would have done so. "No one but Englishmen", says an American historian, "established American independence, and this they did on the basis of English history." Secondly, the colonies, by the time of the accession of George III, had grown up, but the mother country had failed to realize it, and that was perhaps the chief cause of the difficulties.<sup>1</sup>

To conduct a campaign<sup>2</sup> three thousand miles away, in a country a thousand miles long and covered with forest, was, for Great Britain, a difficult task. But the task should not have been insuperable, considering the circumstances of her opponents. The American

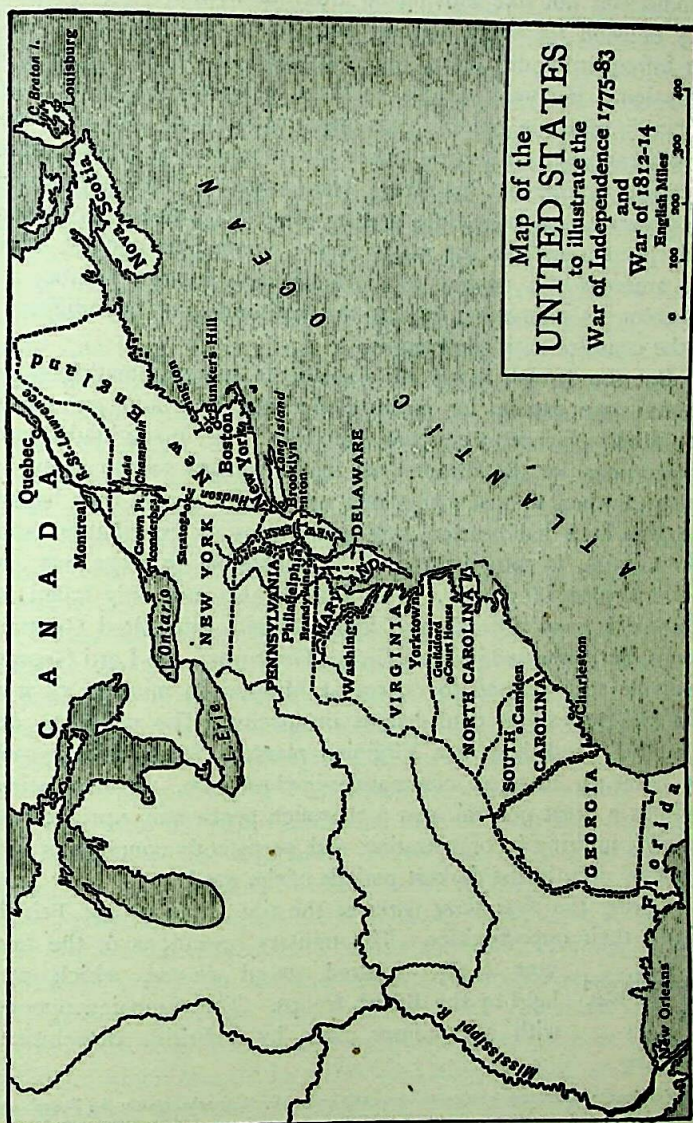
<sup>1</sup> "The British Empire was doomed to be broken asunder", says an American historian, "but it was brought to that disaster by the insistent demand of Englishmen in America for the full enjoyment of those liberties which England had fostered beyond any other country of the world."

"Is there not something extremely fallacious", says an American contemporary, "in the commonplace image of the mother country and children colonies? Are we children of Great Britain any more than the cities of London, Exeter, or Bath? Are we not brethren and fellow-subjects with those in Britain?"

<sup>2</sup> The following summary of the war will make it more intelligible:—

Political History	Military Operations—(v) victory; (d) defeat	
1775. Congress assumes sovereign authority.	Lexington; Boston blockaded; Bunker's Hill. American expedition to Canada.	
1776. July 4. Declaration of Independence.	Evacuation of Boston; Brooklyn (v); capture of New York; occupation of New Jersey; Trenton (d).	
1777.	Brandywine (v); Saratoga (d).	
	(a) America	(b) Maritime and India
1778. France declares war; death of Chatham.	Evacuation of Philadelphia.	
1779. Spain declares war.	Savannah captured (v).	Siege of Gibraltar begins.
1780. Holland declares war. Armed Neutrality.	Charlestown captured (v); Camden (v).	Hyder Ali invades Carnatic.
1781.	Guildford (v); Yorktown (d).	Porto Novo (v).
1782. Lord North resigns; negotiations for peace.		Loss of Minorca (d); battle of Saints off St. Lucia (v); Siege of Gibraltar raised (v).
1783. Peace of Versailles.		







colonist did not like moving far from his home. Moreover, he only enlisted for short periods, and therefore might leave, and not infrequently did leave, his fellow-colonists in the crisis of a campaign. He was, besides, inclined to be insubordinate, "regarding", said one general, "his officer as no more than a broomstick", especially if serving under the command of officers from any other colony but his own. The Congress, which supervised the generals, was loquacious and incompetent, whilst "peculation and speculation", in the words of the commander-in-chief, were rife amongst the contractors. And finally, a large number of the colonists were either loyal to the mother country or indifferent to the cause of both combatants.

But the British made the mistake of underestimating their enemy; one expert, for instance, declared that four regiments would be sufficient to conquer America. They made inadequate preparations for the dispatch of reinforcements to the army in America when they saw that war was probable; and they began the war in a half-hearted way, with ideas of conciliation and compromise, forgetting "that it is impossible to wage war on the principles of peace". The British, also, not only failed to produce a great general, and fought largely with hired German troops, but possessed in Lord George Germaine—the Lord George Sackville who refused to charge at Minden—a minister of war who was to exhibit conspicuous incapacity. The colonists, on the other hand, had in a Virginian planter, *George Washington* by name, a man as commander-in-chief who, without being perhaps a great general, was a thorough gentleman, upright and truthful, untiring in organization, and persistently courageous and steadfast even in the darkest periods of the war.<sup>1</sup>

During the *first three years* of the war (1775-7) the British missed their opportunities. The military operations of the first year (1775) centred round *Boston*, which was held by the British troops. The campaign opened with an attempt made by a British detachment

Lexington and  
Bunker's Hill,  
1775.

<sup>1</sup> Washington, a country gentleman of wealth and position, fought against the French and Indians before and during the Seven Years' War, having been made adjutant of the Virginian forces at the age of nineteen and commander-in-chief at the age of twenty-three; in Braddock's expedition of 1754 he showed great bravery, and had four shot-holes in his coat.



to seize some military stores a few miles away from Boston; on its way back it was somewhat severely handled, especially at *Lexington*. This attack showed that the Americans would fight, but the British commander, General *Gage*, was both over-confident and dilatory. He made an unnecessary frontal attack upon an entrenched position on the top of a hill situated on a peninsula overlooking Boston, and known as *Bunker's Hill*. His forces, burdened with three days' provisions, and marching through long grass on a hot midsummer day, only succeeded in taking the hill at the third attempt, and with the loss of two-fifths of their number. Later on *Gage* wasted his opportunities by not vigorously attacking Washington, who was besieging Boston with hardly any ammunition. Fortunately, however, a brilliant attack by the Americans upon Canada failed in its chief object, the capture of Quebec, owing to its able defence by Carleton. Moreover, in 1774, the British Government had passed an Act, known as the Quebec Act, which by concessions, especially with regard to the Roman Catholic religion, had conciliated the French Canadians; and hence the invading army found no support in Canada.

In the second year (1776) *Howe* was the British commander. Capable but indolent, he was, as a strong Whig, inclined to sympathize with the American cause. He evacuated Boston and took his troops south to Long Island. There he defeated Washington's troops at *Brooklyn*.

*Howe's operations, 1776.*

But his lethargy enabled Washington to withdraw all his troops the night after the battle across the mile of water that separated the island from the mainland. *Howe* followed and took New York; he then defeated Washington in another battle, overran New Jersey, and occupied the country up to the river Delaware. The outlook was indeed black for the colonists; Washington had hardly any troops left, and the situation for a time seemed to be desperate. But at the end of the year the American fortunes revived with a brilliant attack by Washington upon a Hessian regiment, which was cut to pieces on Christmas Day at *Trenton*, an advanced post on the Delaware, whilst the Hessians were celebrating the occasion not wisely but too well.

The third year (1777) witnessed a muddle which ended in



a great disaster for the mother country. There were two plans proposed to the British Government. The first was that of Burgoyne, a member of Parliament and a playwright as well as a general, one of the commanders of the army in Canada. He was to advance south from Canada and Howe was to advance north from New York. The two forces were to unite, with the idea, perhaps, of holding the line of the river Hudson, and isolating the New England colonies. The other plan was that of Howe, who wanted to attack Philadelphia. Lord George Germaine agreed to both—a grave blunder, as it was unlikely that Howe, if he attacked Philadelphia, would be able to send in time an adequate force to join up with Burgoyne.<sup>1</sup> And, in fact, *Burgoyne* never obtained the expected help from the south on which his success depended. He took Ticonderoga, but his difficulties increased as he progressed. His Indian allies deserted because of the hunting season coming on. The country was thickly wooded, and military supplies were inadequate. Finally, outnumbered by four to one, he had to surrender with four thousand men at *Saratoga* (October). That surrender was decisive in the history of the war. The nations of Europe had been looking with no friendly eye on Great Britain. This disaster converted their unfriendliness into hostility, and France, two months after she had heard of it, concluded an alliance with the “United States”. Meantime Howe had won Philadelphia, and at the battle of *Brandywine* defeated Washington, whose army was consequently reduced to the direst straits—but Howe’s success lay lightly in the balance against Saratoga.

Plans of  
campaign,  
1777.

The surrender  
at Saratoga,  
1777.

During the *next three years* (1778–80) our enemies gradually increased. France joined in the war against us in 1778, and Spain in 1779. Moreover, neutral powers claimed, and Great Britain denied the doctrine of “free ships free goods”, that enemy’s goods on board a neutral ship were exempt from capture. Disputes over this, and over the definition of what articles should be included in contraband of war, led in 1780 to

<sup>1</sup> Military critics have thought this was the plan, but as a matter of fact there is no mention of it in the correspondence; the plan in the letters seems to have been to bring aid to Howe to enable him to fight the entire army of Washington.



the British declaring war on Holland, and to Russia, Denmark, and Sweden threatening hostilities upon Great Britain by forming an Armed Neutrality. As a consequence of these fresh enemies, the war spread to the West Indies—with which at that time one-quarter of British trade was carried on—and to India, whilst in the Mediterranean Gibraltar was besieged. Great Britain was in an extremely critical position. The British navy had been allowed to deteriorate since the Seven Years' War. The French navy had been much improved, and in training and numbers it had never so nearly equalled the British, whilst its new tactics of firing at the masts, the sails, and the rigging, and of thereby "hamstringing" its opponents, were to prove very successful. Under these circumstances modern military critics think that the British should have confined their efforts to blockading the enemy's ports. Instead of that the fleet was scattered, and the British tried to hold too many isolated positions.

In America, also, the conditions were entirely altered after 1777. Great Britain no longer held command of the sea, and the French fleet was to form a decisive factor.

In 1778 Clinton, the new commander, evacuated Philadelphia and retired to New York. In 1780 the British determined to undertake operations in the south, as there were many loyalists there. Charlestown, the capital of South Carolina, was brilliantly captured. Cornwallis, the most energetic of the British generals, beat Gates, the conqueror of Saratoga, at *Camden*. He then invaded North Carolina, and in 1781 defeated Greene, the best of the American generals, at *Guildford Court-House*. Finally, he advanced into Virginia.

The Americans were now in despair. But meanwhile what had been gained in the south whilst Cornwallis was there was lost after his departure, owing to the small number of troops he could leave behind. Moreover,

The war in America, 1778-81.  
The surrender at York Town, 1781.

Clinton would not or could not spare any reinforcements from New York for the further operations of Cornwallis himself. The latter, therefore, retired to the coast, to *York Town*, expecting to be supported by the British fleet. But he was blockaded instead by the French fleet, whilst Washington arrived in command of a superior force to cut off his retreat by



land. The position of Cornwallis was then hopeless, and he was forced to surrender (1781). The surrender at York Town practically ended the war. Charlestown was subsequently recaptured by the colonists, and only New York was left to the British.

Elsewhere things had been going badly. Nearly all the West Indian islands were lost, except Barbados and Jamaica. Gibraltar

was hard pressed. The British position in India was precarious. Early in 1782 Minorca was captured by the French, an event which led to the fall of Lord

The war elsewhere, 1779-82.

North's ministry. But two successes in that year enabled Great Britain to retire from the war with some credit. In April, Rodney defeated the French fleet off Dominique in the West Indies in a battle known as the "*Battle of the Saints*", his fleet succeeding in breaking through the French line-of-battle, and the French flagship itself being captured.<sup>1</sup> In September a combined attack upon *Gibraltar* by the French and Spaniards with forty-nine ships of the line and ten floating batteries on the sea side, and with an army of forty thousand men on the land side, signally failed, owing to the pertinacity of Eliott, the governor, and his seven thousand men. Shortly afterwards a British fleet brought final relief to the garrison, which had withstood a siege for three years seven months and twelve days.

Overtures of peace were then made, and in 1783 treaties were concluded at Versailles. The independence of the United States

The Treaties of Versailles, 1783.

was recognized, and, in spite of their efforts to save them, the British had to leave such of the loyalists who did not emigrate to Canada to the mercy or rather to the vengeance of their fellow-colonists. Great Britain gave up to Spain, Minorca and Florida; and to France, Tobago, Senegal, and Goree, besides restoring to her St. Lucia and the Indian settlements which had been taken from France during the war.

The American War of Independence deprived Great Britain

<sup>1</sup>When war broke out between France and Great Britain, Rodney was at Paris in an impecunious condition, and his creditors refused to let him go home. A French nobleman, however, chivalrously came to his rescue with a loan, and Rodney returned. During his two and a half years of command in the American War, Rodney captured a French, a Spanish, and a Dutch admiral, and added twelve line-of-battle ships, all taken from the enemy, to the British navy, including the *Ville de Paris*, the great ship which the city of Paris had given to the French king.



of one empire; but it strengthened the foundations of another.

In 1774, as has been already noted, the British Parliament had passed the Quebec Act for Canada. This Act had extended the boundaries of Canada, had set up a form of government by a Governor and a nominated Council, and had in effect recognized and supported the Roman Catholic Church as the national church of Canada. This Act was very unpopular with the English colonists in the thirteen colonies, and was one of the contributory causes of the war; they especially disliked the clause extending the boundaries of Quebec at the expense, as they thought, of their further expansion, and the clause recognizing the Roman Catholic Church. But by the French colonists of Canada it came to be regarded as the *Magna Charta* of their history, and it did much to reconcile them to their conquerors.

The Quebec Act, 1774.

But now, after the American War of Independence, Canada was to receive a fresh wave of immigrants. The loyalists who had remained faithful to the mother country in the war found their position intolerable in the United States, and a great many of them—known subsequently as the United Empire Loyalists—emigrated to Canada, east of the districts occupied by the French. There they multiplied and prospered. But the differences of race, religion, and temperament caused friction between the French and the English; and finally the British Government in 1791—by the Canada Act—divided Canada into two parts, an eastern and a western, nominating a governor to each, and allowing to each a certain amount of self-government. For a time this arrangement worked. And in the war of 1812 the United States found that their attempt to detach Canada from her loyalty, either by negotiation or by coercion, was to fail. But later, difficulties arose with the mother country, the final solution of which, however, was to be more successful than in the case of the United States.

Influence of war upon Canada.



## XXXVIII. Great Britain and India, 1763-1823

We turn from the West to the East, from America to India, where these twenty years, from 1763-83, are hardly less important. Two things must be borne in mind. First, Condition of India, 1763. India was still in a state of anarchy. The boundaries of States were constantly shifting; there was no such thing, it was said at the time, as a frontier in India. Adventurers sprang up who carved out new States for themselves, or usurped the thrones of old ones; and the Great Mogul Emperor was under the tutelage now of one potentate and then of another. In the second place, the East India Company was in a very undefined and uncertain position after the Seven Years' War was over. The Nabob of the Carnatic and the Nizam of Hyderabad were its allies. It possessed some territory, but not much, on the east coast, and round Bombay and Madras. In Bengal, however, its position was peculiar. Except for Calcutta and some districts near it, the Nabob still governed that province. But he was the Company's nominee, and—put briefly—it may be said that his object was to extract as much money as possible from the country, whilst the Company's officials collected from the Nabob what money and privileges they could obtain, collectively for the Company and individually for themselves.

Such a position in Bengal was bound to lead to difficulties, and it very quickly did. The Nabob who had succeeded Meer Jaffier quarrelled with the Company, massacred some Europeans at Patna, and fled to his neighbour, the Nabob of Oudh. Both Nabobs, however, were defeated at the decisive battle of *Buxar* (1764). It was necessary then to regulate our position. Fortunately *Clive* became Governor of Bengal six months after the battle, and in the short space of twenty-two months made great changes (1765-7). In the first place, he obtained from the Mogul Emperor the financial administration of Bengal and Behar; and thus the East India Company became practically the governors of a country three-

Clive's reforms, 1765-7.



quarters the size of France. Secondly, he made an alliance with the Nabob of Oudh, his idea being that the Nabob's territory might be a useful buffer against aggressions from the west, either on the part of the Mahrattas or the Afghans. Thirdly, and above all, he supplemented the inadequate salaries of the officials, and forbade them to take part in private trading—thus initiating the series of reforms which was eventually to make the British rule in India, so far as British officials at all events were concerned, perhaps the purest in the world. It is sad to think that Clive should have come home to be attacked in Parliament for corruption,<sup>1</sup> and soon afterwards, under stress of disease and anxiety, to commit suicide (1774).

Trade and not conquest had in the past been the object of the East India Company, good dividends rather than warlike distinctions. Consequently the British Government had not interfered with the Company, beyond renewing its charter from time to time. But now that the Company had become the owner of a vast territory, the British Government was bound to assume some portion of the responsibility, more especially as after Clive's departure matters fell into great confusion. Consequently, in 1773, a *Regulating Act* was passed. A governor-general and council of four members were appointed, with control over all the Company's possessions in India. Hence some unity of control was secured. But the Act was in other respects unsatisfactory. The governor-general was liable to be much hampered by the council, and both were exposed to some interference from the judges who were appointed under the same Act.

The first governor-general was *Warren Hastings*.<sup>2</sup> Thwarted now by the council, now by the incompetent governments of Bombay or Madras, with a temper, as he said, "almost fermented into vinegar by the weight of affairs and by everlasting teasing", he yet man-

The Regulating  
Act, 1773.

Warren Hastings  
Governor-general,  
1774-85.

<sup>1</sup> It was in the course of his examination before a parliamentary committee that Clive, describing the temptations to which he was subjected, exclaimed, "By God, Mr. Chairman, at this moment I stand astonished at my own moderation!"

<sup>2</sup> He was a Westminster boy, and had been sent to India at an early age, to the great grief of his headmaster, who thought his classical attainments would be wasted in that arid and commercial atmosphere.



aged to do a vast amount. He divided Bengal into districts for purposes of government, arranged its land revenue, and organized its civil service.

Above all, Warren Hastings by his resourcefulness and courage saved our position in India at a critical time. The disaster at Saratoga and the consequent alliance of the French with the colonists had its effect upon affairs in the East no less than in the West. French agents intrigued with the Mahrattas, and Warren Hastings found himself involved in a war with fighting tribes who were almost a match for our arms. Moreover, in Southern India the French secured in Suffren an admiral, and in Hyder Ali an ally who brought our Indian Empire to the verge of ruin. Hyder Ali, who had usurped the throne of Mysore, was, though ignorant of the alphabet, a very remarkable man. In alliance with the French, he suddenly invaded the plains of the Carnatic, and in three weeks had wellnigh extinguished our power (1780).<sup>1</sup> But Hastings was equal to the occasion. Within twenty-four hours of hearing the news at Calcutta he had made his plan of campaign. Every available man and munition of war was hurried south, and the veteran Eyre Coote—the victor of Wandewash—was appointed to direct the operations. After arduous campaigns, Coote, in 1781, won at *Porto Novo*, though outnumbered by ten to one, a decisive battle, and in the following year Hyder Ali died. At sea, meanwhile, Suffren had found in Hughes as tough a fighter as himself, though a weaker tactician, and, whilst his own captains were jealous and insubordinate, those of Hughes were unselfish and devoted. Five sea-battles were fought in little more than a year, but Suffren was unable to claim a decided advantage.<sup>2</sup> Our position in India was saved, and treaties were finally made both with the Mahrattas and with Tippoo Sahib, Hyder Ali's successor, the one shortly before and the other shortly after the Treaty of Versailles of 1783.

Warren Hastings had not only, however, to fight and to organize,

<sup>1</sup> There is a celebrated description of this invasion, and of the havoc it wrought, in Burke's speech on the Debts of the Nabob of Arcot.

<sup>2</sup> After the war was over, the French and part of the British fleet met at the Cape of Good Hope, and the captains of the British ships at once hastened in a body to pay their respects to the great French commander.



but also to secure dividends for the shareholders of the East India Company. His expenses, indeed, were so great that he committed actions for which he was im-<sup>Charges against Warren Hastings.</sup>peached soon after his return home. Into the details of his famous trial, which lasted for a hundred and forty-five days and lingered over seven years (1788-95), we have no space to enter. He was finally acquitted, but Burke, the great orator of Warren Hastings' time, and Macaulay, the great historian of a subsequent generation, unsparingly condemned him. Of some charges, however, modern investigations show that he was quite innocent. He did not, for instance, connive at the hanging of a famous Hindu, Nuncomar by name, on an unjust charge of forgery because Nuncomar was on the point of exposing Hastings' own acts of corruption.<sup>1</sup> Nor did he, in order to extort money very unjustly from the blameless mother and grandmother of the Nabob of Oudh, cruelly torturing their blameless ministers; the truth being that the Begums—as the mother and grandmother were called—had departed from Oudh with a large sum of money which really belonged to the State, and that probably only slight coercion was needed to induce the ministers to return it.

In other matters Warren Hastings may have acted unwisely, as, for instance, when he let troops out on hire to the Nabob of Oudh for the suppression of the Rohillas, a turbulent tribe of Afghans; or inflicted upon the Rajah of Benares an enormous fine because he refused to pay a sum of money for the expenses of the war. But though it is impossible to justify everything that Clive or Hastings did, we must remember that to the former is due the beginning of our Empire in India, and that the latter not only succeeded in retaining, in the darkest days of our Imperial existence, every acre of land that we then possessed in India, but in leaving our dominions strengthened and organized. Warren Hastings is a not unworthy beginner of that long line of governor-generals and viceroys of whom it has been said that they represent a higher level of ruling qualities than has been attained by any line of hereditary sovereigns, or by any line of elected presidents.

<sup>1</sup> Nuncomar was hanged for forgery, but there is no reason for believing that the decision was an unjust one, or that Warren Hastings had anything to do with it.



It may be convenient at this stage to proceed with the history of India during the forty years after Warren Hastings' retirement from India. Lord North's Regulating Act of 1773 India. Pitt's India Act, 1784. had proved a failure. Consequently, just previously to the retirement of Warren Hastings, the younger Pitt passed, in 1784, an Act reorganizing the government of our possessions in India. The governor-general was given greater powers, and henceforth, subject to a Board of Control sitting in London, directed the politics and the diplomacy of our Indian Empire. In future the governor-general was, as a rule, a person of high birth and connections sent out from Great Britain; and as both the governor-general and the Board of Control were appointed by the king acting on the advice of his ministers, the British Government became directly responsible for our Indian policy. In the appointment of other officials, however, and in matters of trade the East India Company was left supreme, though the Government had to confirm the higher appointments.

The first governor-general under the new system was the *Marquis Cornwallis* (1786-93), the defender of York Town. In his administration three points deserve notice. In the first place, by his own personal example and by his measures he still further purified the administration. Secondly, he made in Bengal a permanent settlement of the land revenue, by which the tax-collectors in that province—*zemindars* as they were called—were practically converted into landlords paying a fixed rent to the government, a policy the expediency of which has been much debated. Thirdly, though he left Great Britain with the intention of pursuing a peaceful policy, he found himself obliged to make war on Tippoo Sahib of Mysore. After a skilful campaign he was successful, and forced his adversary to make peace and to lose half his territories.<sup>1</sup>

After an interval, Richard Wellesley, better known as the *Marquis Wellesley*, the elder brother of the great soldier who eventually became Duke of Wellington, was made governor-general. A brilliant scholar at Eton, he obtained this office

<sup>1</sup> Cornwallis found, like subsequent viceroys, that his work was very laborious and harassing. "I have a great deal more business every day", he wrote to his son at Eton, "than you have in a whole school-day, and I never get a whole holiday."



at the age of thirty-five. He found on his arrival in India, in 1798, a situation which required the exercise of all his abilities. French ambitions were reviving. French officers, by drilling and organizing the troops of native rulers, had not only improved those troops immensely but had obtained very great influence for themselves—one of them was deified after his death and is still worshipped in Southern India. Tippoo Sahib, who proved himself a hard-working ruler as well as a brave and resourceful soldier, had made an alliance with the French in order to realize his supreme object—the downfall of the British. Above all, three weeks after Wellesley reached Madras, Napoleon himself started on the Egyptian expedition, and, if successful, might have proceeded to India (p. 528).

Marquis  
Wellesley  
Governor-  
general,  
1798-1805.

Into the details of Wellesley's great proconsulship limits of space forbid us to enter, and we must only allude to its chief results. First, Wellesley persuaded the Nizam of Hyderabad to expel the French officers in his service, and arranged that, in return for the Nizam giving up part of his territory, the East India Company should maintain an army for his defence. Then he turned against Tippoo Sahib, and the brilliant capture of *Seringapatam* by Baird resulted in Tippoo's death.<sup>1</sup> A large part of Mysore was annexed by the Company, a small part was given to the Nizam, and the remainder was handed over to the representative of the old Hindu dynasty which had ruled there before its expulsion by Hyder Ali. Other annexations in Southern India followed, the result of which was that most of the Carnatic came under direct British control. Hence our territories in the south were enormously extended.

Wellesley's  
policy in  
the south.

In the north, Wellesley's operations were no less important. He made a treaty with the Nabob of Oudh similar to that made with the Nizam, the Company in exchange for territory, including Rohilcund, maintaining an army for the Nabob's defence. War subsequently followed with some of the Mahratta leaders, of whom the most formidable was

Wellesley's  
policy in  
the north.

<sup>1</sup> He was buried with military honours under an escort of British grenadiers, and his family was taken under British protection. The last of his sons, whom Queen Victoria was much interested in seeing in 1854, died in Calcutta in 1877.



Sindhia, whose troops had been trained by French officers. Arthur Wellesley—the future Duke of Wellington—won the battles of *Assaye* and *Argaum* in 1803, the former by an attack of superb audacity against an army twice his strength. Lake won the battle of *Laswarri* and captured Delhi, and with its capture the Mogul emperor came under British control. Later on came a war with Holkar, another Mahratta leader, whose irregular horse were famous throughout India. Against him our army met with a disaster, and the East India Company and the British Government, already frightened by the immensity of the recent annexations, and the cost of the military operations, recalled Wellesley in 1805. Under Wellesley important reforms had been made in administration. But it is chiefly for his extension of our empire that he is remembered; for in the space of seven years he had made our territories continuous from Delhi to Calcutta and from Calcutta to Cape Comorin; he had destroyed or weakened our most dangerous foes; he had closed India to the French, and had exalted Great Britain to be the suzerain power in India.

For nearly ten years after Wellesley's departure little occurred in India. It was a period of inaction and of non-intervention.

Lord  
Hastings  
Governor-  
general,  
1814-23.

But the anarchy in various parts of India soon necessitated British action. Enormous bands of brigands, "human jackals", roamed over Central India, burning and killing and robbing wherever they went. Sometimes these *Pindaris*, as they were called, crossed into British territory and did immense damage. Such a state of things could not continue, and on *Lord Hastings'* arrival as governor-general (1814-23) our policy was changed into one of action. Lord Hastings first had a war with *Nepaul*—the home of the brave Gurkhas—which led to some annexation of territory and to a satisfactory settlement of our relations with that country. In 1817 came the struggle with the *Pindaris*, which led also to a war with the Mahrattas. The result was that both *Pindaris* and Mahrattas submitted; a good deal of territory was annexed, including the territories of the Peshwa of Poona, whilst the boundaries of the various native states in the centre of India were delimited. There for the present we may leave Indian



affairs. Thanks chiefly to Wellesley and Hastings, the British power had been substituted in India for that of the Great Mogul. That eastern empire which had been the dream of Napoleon's ambition had become an accomplished fact with his greatest enemies.

Nor is India the only part of our empire which was developed in the later part of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century. The discoveries of Captain Cook between 1768 and 1779 had given to Great Britain the opportunity of developing a third great continent in Australia. How the opportunity was utilized will be told later.

## XXXIX. The French Revolution and the Great War, 1789-1802

We revert from America and India to the affairs of Europe. Barely ten years were to elapse after the American War of Independence was over before Great Britain was plunged into a war which was to last, with one brief interval, for more than twenty years. In 1789 came the famous French Revolution. France had suffered from a government which was incompetent and arbitrary, a court which was extravagant and frivolous, and an aristocracy which clung to its privileges—above all that of not contributing to the chief taxes—whilst it neglected its duties. She endured a system of taxation which had every possible fault, and which left to the poor peasant only one-fifth of his earnings for himself. Moreover, the people had no share in the government, and the States-General—which had in the Middle Ages corresponded in some measure to the English Parliament—had not met since 1614.

The close of the eighteenth century, however, found people's minds prepared for change. A brilliant writer, Voltaire, had attacked various abuses, particularly those connected with the Roman Catholic Church, and had created, it is not too much to say, the critical atmosphere of his generation. A seductive

The French Revolution, 1789; its causes.



philosopher, Rousseau, had taught people to look back to an imaginary golden age when there was no oppression and no poverty because there were no kings, no nobles, and no priests. In the same year that these two writers died, in 1778, the French monarchy had appealed to its subjects, as we have seen, to support liberty in America; it is not surprising that the French people should seek liberty for themselves when financial difficulties at last forced the king to summon the States-General in May, 1789.

France was at heart loyal, and a great king might have made reforms which would have staved off a revolution. But *Louis XVI*, the king, though well-meaning and amiable, was vacillating and undecided, whilst his queen, Marie Antoinette, though beautiful, was unpopular and indiscreet. The king had no scheme of reforms and no scheme of coercion—he merely let things drift. Consequently events moved quickly after the meeting of the *States-General* at *Versailles*. On previous occasions, the States-General had sat and voted in three estates, representing the nobles, clergy, and people respectively. But on this occasion the representatives of the people insisted on all the orders sitting and voting in one house, and by their pertinacity achieved their object. Then, on *July 14*, the men of Paris took the *Bastille*, the great fortress dominating eastern Paris—and its fall was regarded throughout Europe as the sign of the downfall of absolute monarchy in France.<sup>1</sup> In October, the women of Paris, impelled by fear of famine, marched to Versailles, and brought the king, the royal family, and the States-General to Paris, thinking that they would thus be sure of supplies of bread; and, as a consequence, the government and the assembly became, as time went on, increasingly subject to the influence of the Parisian populace.

The year 1790 was taken up with the task of reorganizing France—with removing abuses in Church and State, in taxation and in the law, in the army and navy. The king's attitude was uncertain, and sometimes he sided with the reformers and at

<sup>1</sup> To the popular imagination the Bastille was impregnable, and its dungeons were full of untried prisoners. As a matter of fact, the Bastille was only defended by a hundred and twenty soldiers, most of them old, and by fifteen cannon, only one of which was fired; and there were only seven prisoners, of whom four were forgers, two were madmen, and the other had been put there by the request of his family.



other times he opposed them. Finally, however, in June, 1791, he escaped from Paris and fled towards the eastern frontier of France. But he was captured at Varennes and was henceforth regarded by many as a traitor because he had fled towards the foreigner.

In 1792 Austria and Prussia declared war and invaded France. In August of that year the Paris mob stormed the Tuileries palace, where Louis XVI lived. Then the Prussians attacked Verdun, "the gateway of France", and during the panic caused by the news of its imminent fall occurred the awful September massacres in Paris, when hundreds of people who had been imprisoned because of their suspected hostility to the Revolution were barbarously murdered. A new assembly, called the Convention, met towards the close of September. This assembly declared France to be a Republic, and a few months later the king was put to death (January, 1793).<sup>1</sup>

The French Revolution affected profoundly every state in Europe. Its ideas of "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity" were popular with European peoples, whilst they aroused the apprehensions of European monarchs. In Great Britain, at first, the Revolution was regarded with sympathy. Pitt, the son of the great Earl of Chatham and the prime minister from 1783 to 1801, watched it with no unkindly eye "as a spectator", to use his own words, and saw no reason why it should affect British policy. Poets such as Wordsworth and Coleridge saw in it the dawn of a new era of happiness and freedom; whilst Radical clergymen preached in its favour, and Radical politicians corresponded with its leaders and formed revolutionary

British  
opinion  
and the  
Revolution.

<sup>1</sup> Marie Antoinette was guillotined in October. Louis XVI's son, the Dauphin, died in 1795, at the age of fifteen. For six months in the year previous to his death he was in a ground-floor room, without light, and often in winter without a fire, and in solitary confinement, his meals being passed to him through a grating.

After the execution of the king the extreme section in the Convention, the Jacobin or Mountain party, overthrew the more moderate section, and the "Reign of Terror" ensued (June, 1793-July, 1794), in the last seven weeks of which nearly fourteen hundred people were sent to the guillotine in Paris alone. The extremists then lost their power, and a more moderate government followed. At the end of 1795 the Convention Assembly was dissolved, and the government was put under the control of two Assemblies and of a committee called the *Directory* (1795-99). Finally, in October, 1799, Napoleon, after his return from Egypt, overthrew the Directory, and became supreme as *First Consul* (The Consulate, 1799-1804), and in 1804 he was elected *Emperor*.



societies. The Whigs thought it bore a resemblance to their own "glorious" Revolution of 1688; and Fox, the chief Whig leader, in particular gave the Revolution his enthusiastic approval, exclaiming of the capture of the Bastille, "How much the greatest event that has happened in the world, and how much the best!"

But, as the Revolution became more violent, opinion altered. Burke, the greatest of all Whigs, who from the first, unlike others of his party, had regarded it with suspicion, published in November, 1790, his "Reflections on the French Revolution", in which he expressed his detestation of it "in its act, consequences, and most of all in its example", and prophesied that its ultimate result would be anarchy; the book made a profound impression not only in Great Britain but in all European courts. Moreover, atrocities such as the September massacres horrified public feeling. Above all, the French revolutionaries were not content to leave other countries alone. They intrigued with revolutionaries in this country, and riots in Dundee, Sheffield, and elsewhere showed the dangers of their exhortations. In the autumn of 1792 other events occurred which hastened on war. The French proclaimed that they would give assistance to any nation that rose for its liberty—which was equivalent to a declaration of war against the monarchies of Europe. They occupied the Austrian Netherlands (they had begun war with Austria in the previous spring), and declared the river Scheldt open to commerce; this river, in order to develop the trade of Holland and Great Britain, had been for a long time, under European treaty, closed to all vessels by the Dutch government, and in declaring it thus open the French government showed a flagrant disregard of all treaty rights.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, France threatened to invade Holland. Once again, as on other occasions, Great Britain felt that her own independence was bound up with that of Holland. Then followed the execution of Louis XVI in the beginning of 1793; and war was declared in February. Pitt had striven to maintain peace as long as he could; but the extremists in France had made peace impossible.

<sup>1</sup> The estuary of the Scheldt was in Dutch territory; ever since 1648 the Dutch had been recognized as having control of it and had excluded all foreigners from it, thereby ruining Antwerp and developing the prosperity of their own port of Amsterdam.



# 1. The Great Coalition and its Failure, 1793-6

Great Britain was not alone in resisting France.<sup>1</sup> Austria and Prussia had begun war with France in the previous year, and to these allies were added Holland and, before long, Spain and Sardinia; and, as usual, Great Britain paid heavy subsidies to the powers composing this Great Coalition. That France, with her army at first a mob, with the discipline of her navy ruined by the Revolution, with the extremists in power and engaged in guillotining one another, and with Royalist risings in various districts, should have successfully resisted such a coalition is one of the marvels of history. The forces of Great Britain, Austria, and Prussia were concentrated in Belgium, and in twelve marches could have occupied Paris.

The Great Coalition against France, 1793.

<sup>1</sup> A summary of the war is appended here:—

## THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR, 1793-1802

### Political History

### Military Operations

#### (a) Continental.

#### (b) Maritime. Extra-European.

The First Coalition.	{	1792. France declares war on Austria and Prussia.]		
		1793. Execution of Louis XVI.		
		1794. The First Coalition.	French driven from Netherlands. Siege of Dunkirk.	Evacuation of Toulon.
		1795. Prussia and Spain leave Coalition. Directory in France.	Allies retire from Netherlands, which French occupy.	First of June (v). Captures in West Indies.
Critical Years.	{	1796.	Napoleon in Italy.	Capture of Cape of Good Hope (v). Quiberon Bay expedition (d).
		1797. Austria makes peace with France.		Bantry Bay expedition.
		1798. Irish Rebellion. Wellesley Gov.-General of India.	Napoleon in Egypt.	Capture of Ceylon (v). St. Vincent (v). Mutinies of seamen. Camperdown (v). Nile (v).
The Second Coalition.	{	1799. The Second Coalition: Napoleon becomes First Consul.	British expedition to Holland.	Capture of Seringapatam (v).
		1800. Act of Union with Ireland. Russia leaves Coalition and forms Armed Neutrality.	Marengo (d). Hohenlinden (d).	Defence of Acre (v). Capture of Malta (v).
		1801. Austria makes peace with France. Alexander I becomes Czar.		Copenhagen (v). Alexandria (v).
		1802. Treaty of Amiens.		Capture of Trinidad (v).

(v) denotes victory or success } of England or her allies.  
(d) denotes defeat or failure }



Coalitions of European powers, however, have seldom worked harmoniously. The allies, as a contemporary said, wanted to hunt the sheep before killing the dog; instead of a joint advance upon the capital, each was intent upon securing the frontier fortresses which it could claim at the peace. Moreover, they were jealous of each other and had no commander to direct the whole operations. Meantime, the armies of France, with their country threatened, exhibited a patriotism and an enthusiasm which carried all before them. The generals represented literally the survival of the fittest, for those that failed were nearly always dismissed and sometimes guillotined. Above all, the new Government that France had evolved left the control of the war to one man, and that a man of genius, Carnot.

Consequently, though in the summer of 1793 there were eight foreign armies on French soil, and Lyons, Toulon, and Brittany had risen against the Revolution, before the end of the year these risings had been put down and all the foreign armies but one had been expelled. In the following year, 1794, the French drove the allies not only from Belgium but from Holland as well, and secured the Rhine frontier that they had been striving for so many centuries to obtain.<sup>1</sup> Holland therefore dropped out of the Coalition, and in 1795 both Prussia and Spain withdrew from it. With 1796 came Napoleon's famous campaign in Italy, in which, after invading Piedmont and forcing its ruler, the King of Sardinia, to withdraw from the war, he defeated the Austrians in a succession of battles, then marched to within ninety miles of Vienna and obliged the Austrians at the beginning of 1797 to make peace.

It must be confessed that Great Britain played a somewhat inglorious part in the military operations from 1793 to 1796. No doubt her allies were largely to blame—Great Britain was heading a crusade, it has been said, with an army of camp followers. But her statesmen had done nothing in the years after the American war to profit

<sup>1</sup> In 1794 the French won sixteen pitched battles, took one hundred and sixteen towns and two hundred and thirty forts, and captured ninety thousand prisoners and three thousand eight hundred cannon; and they opened the next year with capturing the Dutch fleet, which was embedded in the ice, by a cavalry raid.



by its lessons. As a consequence, at the beginning of the French war, both officers and men, whether cavalry or infantry, were untrained, whilst the artillery was worse than at any other previous period of its history. In the course of the war, the Government, at its wits' end to get recruits, adopted the pernicious system of promoting those officers who succeeded in enlisting a certain number of recruits, and sent out regiments of boys instead of men to tropical climates—which, in the case of most of them, meant certain death. In equipment, the Government was scandalously negligent. It failed to send out greatcoats to soldiers campaigning in the Netherlands during the winter, or boots for those fighting in tropical districts infested with dangerous insects. Troops were sometimes sent out who had never fired a shot, or with wholly insufficient supplies of ammunition; and the arrangements for transport and hospitals were inconceivably bad.

But chief among the causes of failure was the fact that our small army was frittered away on a variety of objects instead of being concentrated upon one. In the first year of the war (1793) there were three distinct centres of operations in Europe; and in all there was failure to record. Hood landed a force to co-operate with the French Royalists at *Toulon*; but he had to withdraw after suffering considerable losses. Another force was sent to *Quiberon Bay*, to help the Royalists in Brittany, but arrived too late to be of any service.<sup>1</sup> A third force under the Duke of York was sent to assist the allies in *Belgium*. The duke besieged *Dunkirk* unsuccessfully, but fought in conjunction with the Austrians some engagements in which our men showed bravery. When, however, in the next year, the French advanced in overwhelming numbers, the duke was forced to retire from Belgium to Holland, and finally the remnant of his forces entered Hanover and returned, in 1795, back to England.

Meantime, outside Europe, the chief centre of military operations was in the *West Indies*. A promising start was made in

<sup>1</sup> Two years later, in 1795, an expedition was sent to Quiberon to aid a fresh rising. By order of the Government it occupied, as a base of operations, a barren rock in the Atlantic, with no safe landing-place, and eventually withdrew with great difficulty, having achieved nothing.



1793. But the French sent out reinforcements, and not only recaptured most of what they had lost but stirred up the negro slaves in our own islands. Our own forces, inadequately reinforced and inadequately equipped, were wasted by yellow fever and the hardships of the campaign.

In West  
Indies,  
1793-8.

An army, however, sent out in 1796 under Abercromby—the ablest general of the time—succeeded in restoring order in our own islands and in recapturing some of the French; and, finally, in 1798 the British made a treaty of peace with the famous negro, Toussaint l'Ouverture, who had made himself master of the greater part of San Domingo. The net result of our operations in the West Indies was the capture of Martinique and St. Lucia, and the treaty just alluded to which saved the harbours of San Domingo from being the haven for French privateers. But these gains had been accomplished at the expense, it has been estimated, of a hundred thousand men, of whom half had died during the campaigns and the other half were discharged as permanently disabled. In the East, however, we were more successful; we captured the French settlements in India (1793) and the settlements of Holland in the Far East (1795), besides the Cape of Good Hope.

Our maritime supremacy enabled us to destroy our enemies' commerce and to occupy some of their islands. But even on the sea during the opening years of the war our operations were somewhat disappointing. Lord Howe won a battle in the Atlantic, known as *the glorious First of June*, in 1794; but the great convoy of corn, which it was all-important for the French fleet to protect, got through to France unseen during the manœuvres before and after the battle. Moreover, the British did not at first efficiently undertake the blockade of the French ports, and more especially of Brest. Consequently in 1796 the French, taking the offensive, were able to dispatch a fleet from Brest to *Bantry Bay* in Ireland with fifteen thousand men on board. The ship, however, containing the French admiral and general lost touch with the fleet,<sup>1</sup> and the winds

British  
operations  
on the sea,  
1793-6.

<sup>1</sup> The French fleet left Brest just as night was coming on, and Pellew, the commander of a British frigate which was watching the port, attached himself to the French fleet, just out of gunshot, and by making false signals, burning blue lights, and sending up rockets, played havoc with the commander-in-chief's orders, and got the fleet into hopeless confusion.



were persistently contrary for the remainder of the fleet when it tried to sail up the bay; so that the French had finally to retire without landing in Ireland at all. If they had landed, they might have roused that island to a successful rebellion. In another sphere of operations, in the Mediterranean, the British missed their opportunities. The fleet might have commanded the coast road to Genoa and increased the difficulties of the French campaigns in Italy; as it was, Napoleon's wonderful success in Italy in 1796 led us to evacuate that sea in the following year.

## 2. Isolation of Great Britain and her Victories on Sea, 1797-8

The chance of crushing France had been lost in 1793, and four years later—in 1797—Great Britain found herself in a desperate position. France held the whole of the Netherlands and controlled the Dutch fleet; by an alliance with Spain she practically controlled the Spanish fleet as well. Great Britain herself had no ally upon the Continent. Scotland was dissatisfied and Ireland on the verge of rebellion. Consols had sunk to 50, and there was a run on the Bank of England. Worst of all, the seamen mutinied. At Spithead they protested against many real grievances—the lowness of the pay, the embezzlement of part of it by the paymasters, the insufficiency of the food, the severity of the discipline, and the shortness of leave; and when they were promised redress by "Black Dick", as the sailors lovingly called Lord Howe, the mutiny ended. At the Nore, Parker, the leader of the mutineers, was infected with revolutionary ideas. He wanted the seamen to elect their own officers, and hoisted the red flag of anarchy. But the Government showed energy, the mutiny was suppressed and its leader hanged.

Nevertheless it was the navy which in this, as in other critical years, was to save Great Britain. In February, before the mutinies, Jervis, afterwards created Lord St. Vincent, beat the Spanish fleet off *Cape St. Vincent*. In the battle Nelson distinguished himself. The Spanish fleet was sighted in two divisions, and Jervis was manoeuvring to keep the sections apart. Nelson, divining his chief's

Critical position of Great Britain, 1797.

Battles of St. Vincent and Camperdown, 1797.

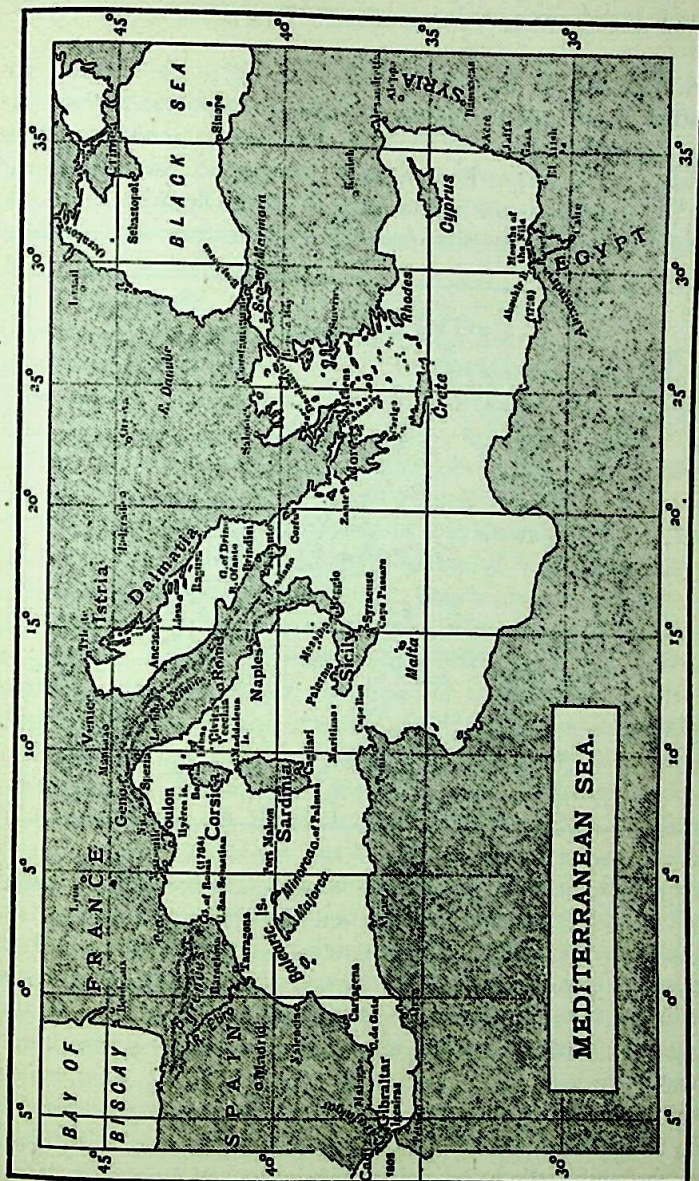


intentions, at the critical moment took the responsibility, without orders, of swinging his vessel out of the line, and was just in time to attack the leading Spanish ships of one division as they were on the point of getting into touch with the other. In October, after the mutinies were over, Duncan defeated the Dutch fleet off *Camperdown* in the Texel.<sup>1</sup> Getting in between the Dutch and the shore, he fought them pell-mell without any order or system, and won a notable victory.

Our dangers, however, were not yet over. At the beginning of 1798, Napoleon was sent to Brest to decide upon the feasibility of an invasion of Ireland. If his decision had been in its favour, and he had arrived in Ireland in the summer of 1798, just at the time that the rebellion broke out, the result might have been disastrous. But fortunately Napoleon decided against an invasion. Indeed his mind was captivated by ideas of Eastern conquest, and he projected an invasion of Egypt, with the ultimate object perhaps of marching upon India. The French Government agreed, and preparations for the expedition were secretly made. Napoleon left Toulon in the spring of 1798 and took Malta. But he was extremely lucky even to arrive in Egypt. Nelson had just been sent to reoccupy the Mediterranean, and, but for the absence owing to a storm of his frigates—on which he relied for information—he must have caught Napoleon. He had to wait for reinforcements, and then guessing that Napoleon's objective was Egypt, he sailed from Sardinia for Alexandria. Shortly afterwards Napoleon left Malta for the same destination, though his fleet steered first for Crete. The tracks of the French and British fleets during one night must have crossed, and for three days the fleets were steering roughly parallel courses some sixty miles apart. Nelson sailed the faster and reached Alexandria first. Finding no signs of the French, he thought that he had guessed wrongly and doubled back to Sicily. Napoleon's fleet meantime, after coasting by Crete, sailed to Alexandria, and his troops landed, won the *battle of the Pyramids* against

<sup>1</sup> During the mutiny the British had kept up their blockade of the Dutch fleet with only two ships, as all the others mutinied. Duncan, the admiral, kept making signals to the mutinous ships as if they were still under his command, and the Dutch fleet consequently did not stir.





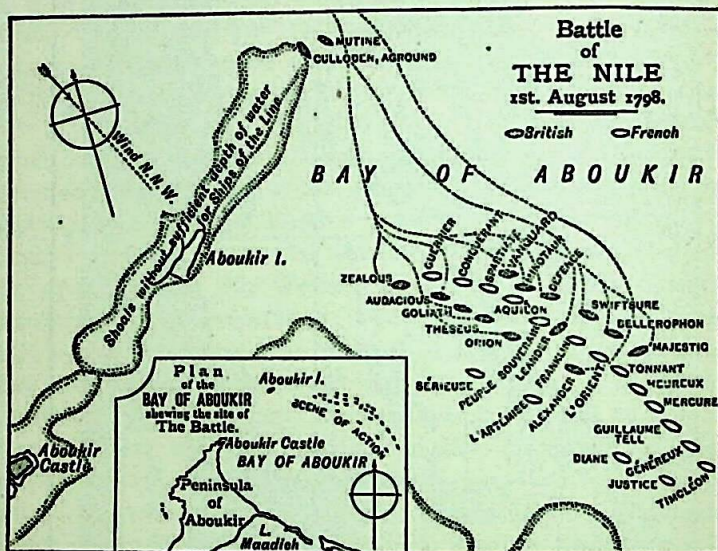
Copyright, 1892, by Captain Mahan.  
From Mahan's *Influence of Sea Power upon the French Revolution and Empire*. (By permission.)



the Mamelukes, who then governed the country, and took Cairo.

Nelson heard of Napoleon's arrival in Egypt, sailed back to Alexandria, and upon August 1 sighted Napoleon's fleet at anchor in *Aboukir Bay* close to the mouths of the Nile. The French fleet had made the two great omissions of not anchoring their fleet as close to the shore as possible and of not joining their vessels by chains.

The battle of the Nile, Aug. 1, 1798.



Nelson could trust his captains, as he said, "to find a hole somewhere", and they quickly realized that they were able to pass on both sides of the French ships as well as between them, and to concentrate their forces first on the van and then on the centre and rear of the French fleet. Beginning at six o'clock in the evening, the battle lasted far into the night and was continued the next morning. The French flagship, *L'Orient*, blew up at 10 p.m., and before the battle was over eleven out of the thirteen French ships had been captured or sunk. It was a brilliant victory, in which all the captains, fighting, as Nelson said, "like a band of brothers", had distinguished themselves.



### 3. The Second Coalition and its Failure, 1799-1800

The battle of the Nile had great consequences. Not only did it prevent Tippoo Sahib in India from obtaining any further help from the French (p. 517), and give the British control of the Mediterranean, but it encouraged the formation of another coalition of European powers against France (1799). The insolence and aggressiveness of the foreign policy pursued by the French Government had roused the Czar; and Austria and Turkey also joined in the coalition. Affairs at first looked very promising. The French were almost driven out of Italy, while the British had in 1798 taken Minorca and blockaded Malta. The British, freed from their entanglements in the West Indies by the treaty of 1798 with Toussaint l'Ouverture, again sent an army to Holland under the command of the Duke of York. Thanks to Lord St. Vincent an efficient system of blockading the great French port of Brest was adopted.<sup>1</sup> France herself, under an incapable and intolerant Government, was threatened with bankruptcy, anarchy, and civil war. Meanwhile Napoleon's own plans were thwarted by the maritime supremacy of the British. He invaded Syria, but British ships under Sydney Smith captured his siege train—it was going by sea—and the guns which Napoleon had intended for the attack upon *Acre* were therefore used in its defence. Aided by British seamen, Acre held out. With this town untaken, Napoleon was unable to advance, and had to retreat to Egypt with his great schemes of conquest unaccomplished.

The Second Coalition against France in 1799, and its early successes.

But then the tide turned, and the year that opened so well for the allies was to end gloomily. The British troops had been sent to Holland in expectation of assistance from the Dutch and the Russians. The Russian contingent, however, proved inefficient and the Dutch soldiers never came at all.

Its later failure.

<sup>1</sup> St. Vincent's maxim was to be "close in with Ushant (the island outside Brest) in an easterly wind", which was the favourable wind for the escape of the French fleet; and only once during St. Vincent's command (which lasted 121 days) did the main fleet off Unshant fail, owing to fog, to communicate with the in-shore squadron stationed between Brest and Ushant. St. Vincent made himself very unpopular by ordering that when vessels went home to refit or take in stores, their officers were not to sleep on shore or go farther inland than three miles.



Our own army, badly equipped and worse provisioned, fighting at one time in a district cut up by dykes and canals and at another in one of sand dunes, could do little; but it fought sufficiently well to be able to make a capitulation by which it was allowed to return to England. The French won a great victory in Switzerland over the Austro-Russian army, and then Austria and Russia quarrelled and the latter withdrew from the coalition. Above all, Napoleon came back to France. Sydney Smith caused English newspapers to be sent to Napoleon giving an account of affairs in Europe. Sent no doubt with the amiable design of making Napoleon thoroughly uncomfortable, they had the effect of making him decide upon an immediate return; and after an exciting voyage, in which he managed to elude all British ships, Napoleon landed safely in France in October. He was welcomed enthusiastically. The old Government was overthrown, and by Christmas Day, 1799, Napoleon, with the new title of First Consul, controlled the destinies of France.

Napoleon, after restoring some sort of order in France, turned his attention first to the Austrians, who were fighting in Italy.

He crossed the Alps, got in the rear of the Austrian army, beat it at the celebrated victory of *Marengo* in June, 1800, and won North Italy; another French

The battle of Marengo; the Armed Neutrality, 1800.

victory, secured at *Hohenlinden* in December by another general, forced the Austrians to make peace at the beginning of 1801. Against the British, Napoleon made use of the grievances of neutral powers. No country denied that a neutral ship carrying contraband of war or attempting to enter a blockaded port was liable to seizure. But the British, in the definition of what constituted contraband of war, included food-stuffs and naval stores, such as hemp, which was one of the chief exports of Russia; and they claimed the right to seize vessels bound for a port declared to be blockaded, though the blockade might be a "paper one" with no adequate force to support it. Moreover, they seized goods belonging to the enemy, even when carried on neutral ships under control of their own country's warships. Neutrals contested these claims, and at the end of 1800 the Armed Neutrality of Russia, Denmark, and Sweden was formed to support their views.



#### 4. Renewed Isolation of Great Britain, 1801, and the Treaty of Amiens, 1802

The year 1801, like the year 1797, was therefore a critical year for Great Britain. She was again without an ally on the Continent. The Armed Neutrality threatened her with war. The prime minister, Pitt, retired in February, and was succeeded by an incompetent minister called Addington. But the events of a fortnight at the end of March and the beginning of April completely altered the situation. Abercromby, who had been sent to operate, with greatly inferior forces, against the French army still in Egypt, succeeded in effecting a landing and winning a brilliant victory at *Alexandria*, which led to the capitulation of the French forces five months later. Two days after this battle the Czar Paul was assassinated. With his death, the "trunk"—as Nelson called Russia—of the Armed Neutrality was broken, and the new czar, Alexander I, was favourable to the British and made a treaty with them. Meantime disasters had occurred to the "branches" of the Armed Neutrality. The British captured the Danish and Swedish islands in the West Indies. Above all, on the 1st of April, came the battle of *Copenhagen*. Nelson, with part of the British fleet, forced his way up the intricate straits in front of the capital, attacked and silenced the Danish batteries, took and sank the Danish fleet, and before he retired had forced the Danish Government to renounce the Armed Neutrality,<sup>1</sup> and so opened the Baltic to the British fleet.

Great Britain, after this fortnight of success, was ready, burdened as she was by a gigantic debt and governed by a pacific minister, for peace; and so was Napoleon. Before the end of the year the preliminaries were signed, and developed into the Treaty of Amiens in 1802.

"It was a peace", said a contemporary, "of which everyone was

<sup>1</sup> Parker, the British commander-in-chief, allowed Nelson to make this attack with part of the fleet whilst he remained outside with the remainder of the ships. When, after three hours' fighting, the Danes seemed to be holding their own, Parker hoisted the signal to "discontinue the action". But Nelson exclaimed to an officer, "You know, I have only one eye—I have a right to be blind sometimes", and then putting the telescope to his blind eye exclaimed, "I really do not see the signal!"



glad and nobody proud." Great Britain gave up all her conquests save Ceylon and Trinidad, whilst France retained the country which is now called Belgium, and the Rhine frontier.

For nearly the whole of its course, the war had been conducted by Pitt, and his lieutenant Dundas. In Macaulay's opinion, Pitt's war policy was that of a driveller; and it has been said of Dundas that he was so profoundly ignorant of war as to be unconscious even of his ignorance. The judgments are somewhat harsh. But it is impossible to read the details of the war without realizing that our statesmen not infrequently failed to take sufficient advantage of the opportunities offered them, had no clear or consistent idea of their objectives, and made the task of the generals always difficult and sometimes impossible by providing them with inadequate or ill-equipped forces. Hence much of the war is disappointing; but in the West Indies, in the Netherlands, and above all in Egypt our soldiers fought bravely, and some of our generals—and more especially Abercromby—exhibited considerable capacity, whilst the navy won for itself immortal glory.

Reflections on  
the conduct  
of the war.

## XL. The Napoleonic War, 1803-15

The Peace of Amiens was merely a truce, for the reorganization of France failed to satisfy Napoleon's ambitions, and his aggressive policy made the renewal of war inevitable. The First Consul annexed Piedmont and Elba. As a mediator he intervened in Germany and reconstructed the boundaries of its states so as to suit French interests; he sent thirty thousand soldiers to Switzerland and gave that country a new constitution. Above all, he virtually annexed Holland, and thus once again British supremacy was threatened in the North Sea. But Napoleon's ambitions were not limited to Europe. The official report of a French colonel who had been sent to Egypt aroused great indignation in Great Britain; for the colonel expressed the opinion that six thousand French troops would be sufficient to recapture that country; and

Causes of the  
renewal of war  
in 1803.



the fact that this report was published in the official French newspaper showed that Napoleon had not renounced French ambitions in that quarter. We now know also—though Great Britain did not realize it at the time—that Napoleon had designs upon the Cape of Good Hope, upon India, and upon Australia. Napoleon on his side made bitter complaints because Great Britain, contrary to the terms of peace, still retained Malta in her hands, and because the British newspapers made attacks upon him. War eventually broke out in 1803. It was fortunate, perhaps, that it came as quickly as it did. Napoleon was building a very large fleet, which might have successfully challenged our maritime supremacy if time had been given for its completion.

## 1. Napoleon and the Invasion of England, 1803-5

The war which now ensued is generally called the *Napoleonic War*.<sup>1</sup> For the first twenty-nine months after it broke out, from

<sup>1</sup>The following summary of the war will be found useful:—

### Political History

### Military Operations

#### (a) Continental.

#### (b) Maritime and extra-European. Assaye (v).

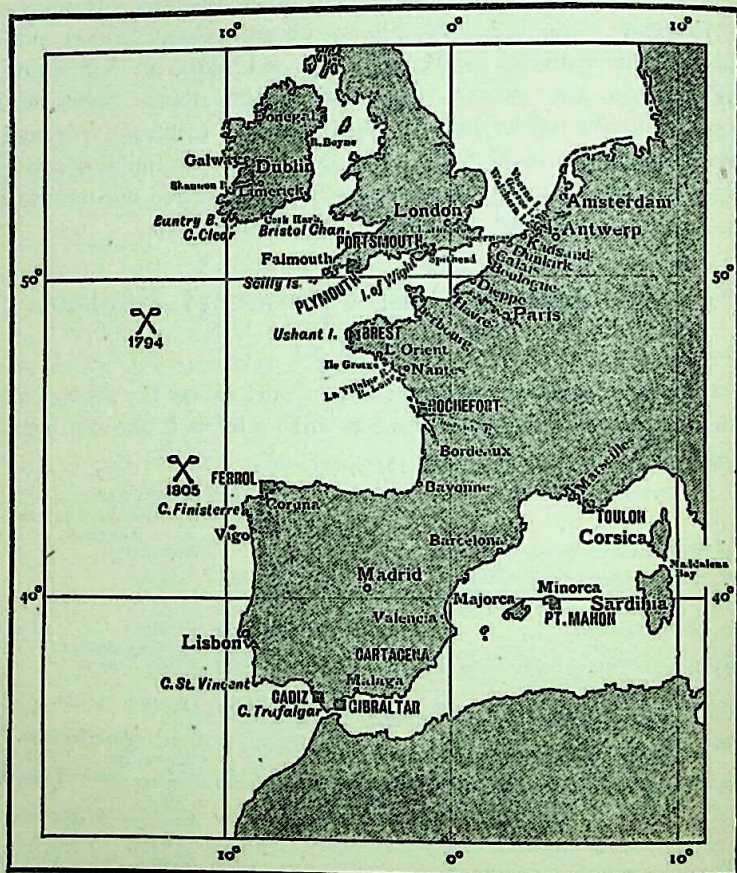
- |   |                                       |  |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1803. England declares war on France.   |                                       |  |
| 1804. Pitt becomes Prime Minister; Napoleon crowned Emperor; Spain declares war on England. |                                       |  |
| 1805. Third Coalition.  | Austerlitz (D); Austria defeated.     | Trafalgar (v); Cape Colony captured (v). Berlin decrees. |
| 1806. Death of Pitt; end of Holy Roman Empire.  | Jena (D); Prussia defeated.           |  |
| 1807. Treaty of Tilsit; Napoleon occupies Portugal.   | Friedland (D); Russia defeated.       | Orders in Council.                                       |
| 1808. Joseph made King of Spain; beginning of Peninsular War.                               |                                       | (c) <i>Peninsular War</i> .<br>Vimiero (v).              |
| 1809. Austria declares war on Napoleon, and at end of year makes peace.                     | Wagram (D); Walcheren expedition (D). | Corunna (v); Talavera (v).                               |
| 1810.   |                                       | Busaco (v); lines of Torres Vedras.                      |
| 1811.   |                                       | Albuera (v); Fuentes d'Onoro (v).                        |
| 1812. Russia declares war on France, and United States on England.                          | Napoleon's invasion of Russia.        | Badajoz (v); Salamanca (v).                              |
| 1813. Fourth Coalition. Prussia and Austria declare war on France.                          | Leipsic (v).                          | Vittoria (v).  |
| 1814. Abdication of Napoleon; Congress of Vienna.   |                                       | Orthez (v); Toulouse (v).                                |
| 1815. The Hundred Days. Peace of Paris.   | Ligny (D); Quatre Bras; Waterloo (v). |  |

(v) denotes victory or success } of England or her allies.  
(D) denotes defeat or failure }



May, 1803, until October, 1805, the main interest centres in Napoleon's plans for the invasion of England. To carry out his great scheme, Napoleon stationed at and near Boulogne nearly a hundred thousand

The attempted  
invasion of  
England, 1803-5.



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From Mahan's *Influence of Sea Power upon the French Revolution and Empire*.  
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soldiers<sup>1</sup>—the soldiers who were afterwards to win such a wonderful series of victories on the Continent; and for the transport of

<sup>1</sup> Napoleon hoped to have 150,000 men; as a matter of fact, during the critical months of 1805, he had only 93,000 men.



this army he built over two thousand flat-bottomed boats, propelled by oars and easily beached. But swarms of British frigates, sloops, and gun-vessels were patrolling the Channel, and Napoleon soon realized that a fleet was essential to convoy his flotilla of boats across the thirty miles of sea that separated France from England. The French ships-of-war, however, lay inside the great harbours of Brest and Toulon and the smaller ones of Rochefort and Ferrol<sup>1</sup>; and outside those harbours, ceaselessly and untiringly watching the French vessels, were the British fleets. The blockade of Brest by Cornwallis—the brother of the soldier—excited the wonder of the world, whilst almost equal vigilance was shown by the British commanders off Ferrol and Rochefort. Nelson could not exercise over Toulon so rigid a blockade, but he had it carefully watched by his frigates, and his fleet during these critical months never went into port except to an open roadstead.<sup>2</sup> Napoleon's great army at Boulogne never saw those "far-distant, storm-beaten British ships" outside the French harbours, but nevertheless they "stood between it and the dominion of the world".

How were the French fleets to elude the blockading British ships and obtain command of the Channel for sufficient time to enable the flotilla to cross to England?<sup>3</sup> Napoleon's brain spun plan after plan, but they were all foiled by the ability of Lord Barham, the first lord of the admiralty at Whitehall, and by the vigilant co-operation of the admirals afloat. Limits of space forbid reference except to the last plan of all, a plan devised early in 1805, when Spain had been drawn into an alliance with Napoleon and consequently when her fleet was available for offensive operations against Great Britain. Under this plan, there was to be a general rendezvous of all the French and Spanish fleets in the West Indies, and the combined armada was then to return to Europe and sweep aside all opposition. The

Villeneuve  
and Nelson.

<sup>1</sup> Ferrol belonged to Spain, but it was virtually annexed at this time by Napoleon.

<sup>2</sup> Cornwallis blockaded Brest from May, 1803, until after the battle of Trafalgar, 1805—a blockade unequalled in length; and during the whole of that time no French fleet got out. Nelson for two whole years, wanting ten days, never left the *Victory*.

<sup>3</sup> Napoleon at one time thought the command of the Channel for twelve hours would be sufficient, at another time three days. The French admiral at Brest thought "at least a fortnight was necessary", as the Channel was too stormy to be always practicable for the transport-boats.



Brest fleet, however, was unable to escape. But the Toulon fleet under Villeneuve got away in March, picked up the Spanish fleet at Cadiz, and reached Martinique (May 14). Nelson, who at first thought the Toulon fleet was destined for the East, and who was bound by his orders specially to guard against an attack on Egypt, Naples, or Sicily, watched the sea between Sardinia and the coast of Tunis; and then, hearing of Villeneuve's cruise westward, he went to Gibraltar, reaching it just eight days before Villeneuve reached the West Indies. Various pieces of information led him to conclude that Villeneuve's destination was the West Indies,<sup>1</sup> and he accordingly followed him there without delay.

But when Nelson had reached Barbados (June 4), and was within a hundred miles of his quarry, inaccurate information given him by a British general caused him to go south to Trinidad instead of North to Martinique where Villeneuve was.<sup>2</sup> The latter, when he heard of Nelson's arrival, wisely decided on an immediate return home. Nelson followed some days later, and sent forward a fast brig to announce the news. The brig passed Villeneuve's fleet on the way home, and brought intelligence to the admiralty in time for a fleet to be concentrated under Calder to meet Villeneuve on his return journey off *Cape Finisterre*.<sup>3</sup> Calder, with an inferior force, fought an action in a fog, and captured two of Villeneuve's ships (July 22). The action, however, was not decisive, and Calder failed to renew it the next day; consequently Villeneuve was enabled to withdraw to Corunna, a port near Ferrol. Meantime Nelson had returned to the South of Spain, and, hearing nothing of Villeneuve, went to join Cornwallis off Brest.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This was not a brilliant guess on Nelson's part, but the intelligent use of what information he could gather from other ships.

<sup>2</sup> "But for wrong information," said Nelson, "I should have fought the battle on June 6th, where Rodney fought his."

<sup>3</sup> The captain of the brig reached the admiralty one night at eleven o'clock. But Lord Barham, being an old man nearly eighty years of age, had gone to bed, and no one dared to arouse him. Lord Barham was furious next morning when he heard of the delay; but in half an hour he had made up his mind what to do, and without waiting to dress drafted the necessary orders. By nine o'clock in the morning the admiralty messenger was carrying these orders to Portsmouth.

<sup>4</sup> Even if Villeneuve had not met Calder, it is unlikely that he would have eluded Cornwallis, who was guarding the approaches to the Channel as well as blockading Brest, or that he would have effected a junction with the Brest fleet. As has been pointed out, Napoleon in his schemes ignored two factors—first, that a wind favourable for the relieving force to



With Villeneuve at Corunna the danger to England was not yet over. In August, however, Villeneuve left that port, and, instead of going north to attempt co-operation with the Brest fleet, he went south and entered Cadiz. There he was shortly afterwards blockaded by the British fleet, and Napoleon had to give up all ideas of invasion. Moreover, Pitt, who had displaced Addington as prime minister, had succeeded in forming another coalition against France—the third that he formed—consisting of Russia, Austria, Great Britain, and Sweden. Accordingly Napoleon marched his army away from Boulogne to attack Austria. Meantime Villeneuve was watched by Nelson, who had, after a short rest in England, returned to his command. Villeneuve, however, could not lie idle while the British assumed the offensive, as they began to do, in the Mediterranean; urged on by Napoleon, and on the point of being superseded, he ventured to leave Cadiz, intending to check the British operations against Naples. But Nelson attacked him and the battle off *Cape Trafalgar* resulted (Oct. 21).

The allied fleet of thirty-three ships of the line, after it left Cadiz, was discovered by Nelson in a slightly curved line some five miles long. Nelson had previously determined to make an attack upon the centre and rear of the allied fleet, with his own twenty-seven ships arranged

Battle of  
Trafalgar,  
Oct. 21, 1805.

in two columns. Of one of these columns Collingwood was in command with orders to attack the rear ships, whilst Nelson himself led the other with the object of fighting the centre and keeping off the van ships of the enemy. The action began about noon. Collingwood in the *Royal Sovereign* outdistanced the ships in his own column,<sup>1</sup> and for a quarter of an hour fought the enemy single-handed. Somewhat later Nelson's column got into action. Nelson's ship, the *Victory*, led, and her first broadside dismounted twenty guns and killed or wounded some four hundred men of the enemy. The fighting was carried on

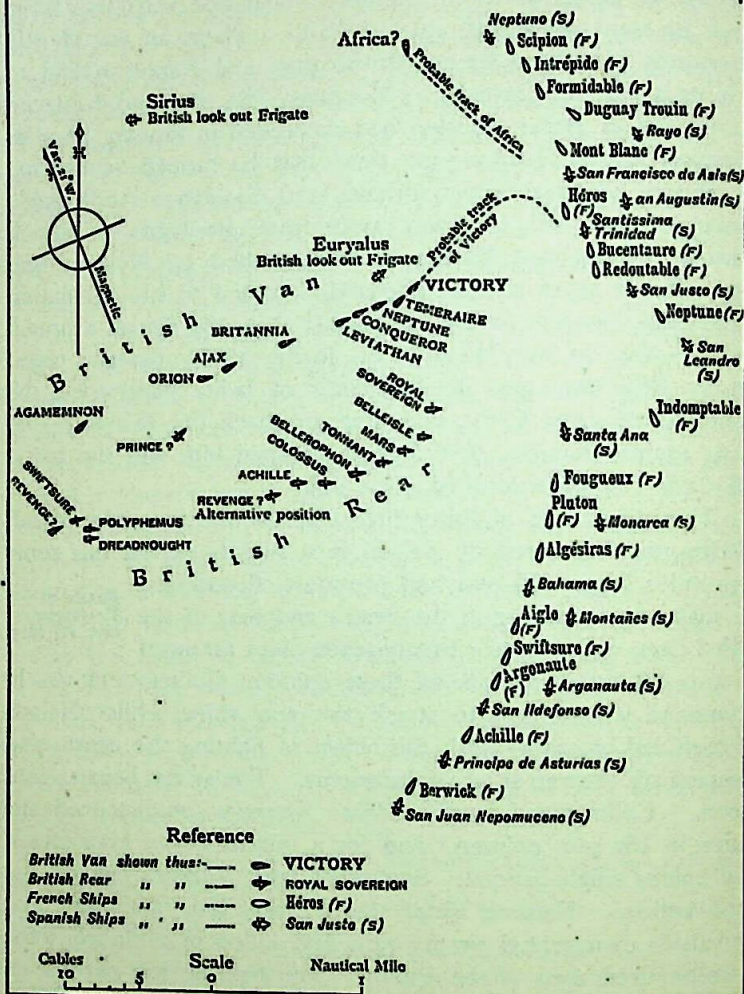
attack was usually foul for the blockaded force to come out; secondly, that if the blockading force did go away to meet the attack, the blockaded force would not be able to tell under a lay or two whether it had gone or not.

<sup>1</sup> "See how that noble fellow Collingwood carries his ship into action!" was Nelson's comment, and almost at the same time Collingwood exclaimed, "What would Nelson give to be here!" It was just before Collingwood began his attack that Nelson issued his famous signal, "England expects every man to do his duty".



# BATTLE OF TRAFALGAR

showing the position of the ships at noon on October 21, 1805



For a long time it was a matter of controversy as to how the attack at Trafalgar was actually made. The investigations, however, of an Admiralty Committee have placed the matter beyond doubt, and the present plan is based upon that issued in their Report of 1913. Collingwood had been directed by Nelson—in a memorandum issued a few days before the battle—to attack the rear ships of the enemy simultaneously with all his ships disposed in a line parallel to that of the enemy; and he carried out this order as far as was possible—having regard to the wind and the condition of his ships.



with fierce determination by both sides; but the British gunnery proved its superiority, and eventually, out of thirty-three ships of the enemy, the British captured nineteen. In the course of the battle, however, Nelson was wounded in the spine with a musket ball and died in the hour of victory.<sup>1</sup> "It does not become me to make comparisons," Lord St. Vincent had written previously, "there is but one Nelson." And later generations have endorsed this verdict.

## 2. Growth of Napoleon's Power, 1805-9, and the Continental System

Great Britain had vanquished Napoleon on the sea, and for the remainder of the war her maritime supremacy was not seriously contested; but she seemed powerless to stop Napoleon's progress on land. On December 2, 1805—six weeks after Trafalgar—Napoleon's campaign in Germany culminated in the defeat of the Austrians and Russians at *Austerlitz*, a defeat which broke up the Third Coalition and forced Austria to make peace.<sup>2</sup> The beginning of 1806 saw the death of Pitt, the brain of the Third Coalition, and the end of it the downfall of Prussia, which after a ten years' neutrality had at last been induced to take up arms against France, only to be overwhelmed at the battle of *Jena*. In the summer of 1807, as a result of Napoleon's victory at *Friedland* and of Russia's dissatisfaction owing to the tardiness of Great Britain—so the Russians alleged—in providing her with subsidies, the Czar made at *Tilsit* an alliance with Napoleon, and not only agreed to the dismemberment of Prussia and to the reorganization of Germany, but promised in secret articles to make common cause with Napoleon against Great Britain. In the autumn of 1807 Portugal, the old ally of Great Britain, was attacked; Lisbon was occupied by French troops, and the Portuguese royal family

Growth of  
Napoleon's  
power,  
1805-8.

<sup>1</sup> Just before his death Nelson was told that fourteen or fifteen of the enemy's ships had surrendered. "That is well," he answered, "but I bargained for twenty."

<sup>2</sup> Pitt was at Bath when he heard the news of *Austerlitz*. Shortly afterwards he went to Putney, and seeing, on entering his house, a map of Europe, he exclaimed, "Roll up that map, it will not be wanted these ten years." The battle hastened Pitt's decline, and he died six weeks after receiving news of it.



fled to Brazil. Finally, in the spring of 1808, Napoleon, making unscrupulous use of the hostility between Charles, the king of Spain, who has been described as a good-natured imbecile, and his cowardly son Ferdinand, persuaded both father and son to go to Bayonne, and there—not without threats—got the one to resign the crown of Spain and the other to renounce his claim to it, and sent his own brother, Joseph, to Madrid to become king.

Napoleon then seemed supreme. The French empire included France, Belgium, the land up to the Rhine, and Piedmont and Tuscany. As King of Italy, Napoleon had the direct rule, in addition, of Lombardy and Venetia. As Protector of the Confederation of the Rhine, he controlled the policies and the armies of nearly all the German powers except Austria and Prussia. Of his brothers, Louis was King of Holland, Jerome King of Westphalia, and Joseph King of Spain, whilst his brother-in-law, Murat, was King of Naples. Russia was his ally, whilst Prussia—reduced to half its former size—and Austria were quiescent.

Great Britain alone remained to withstand Napoleon's power. But, if she could not be defeated, she might be starved. Napoleon, "if he found it impossible to strike this enemy at the heart, could cut off the supplies to the stomach"; if he could not invade Great Britain, he might ruin the trade on which her prosperity depended. If Great Britain's merchandise might be carried on the ocean, it might yet, in Napoleon's words, "be repelled by all Europe from the Sound to the Hellespont". Accordingly, at the end of 1806, he issued from *Berlin* his famous decrees declaring the British Isles to be in a state of blockade—though there was not one French ship-of-war within miles of any one of their ports. As a result of these decrees, no ship coming from Great Britain and Ireland or her colonies might be received in the ports of France or of allied powers, and any goods of British origin on land or sea might be seized. To the "Continental System", as the system under this decree was called, Austria and Prussia and Russia, and all the lands under Napoleon's influence, had to submit.

Napoleon's  
position,  
1808.

Napoleon and  
Great Britain;  
the "Continental  
System".







But to be successful, the Continental System must be complete; one leak would allow British goods to enter anywhere on the Continent. And it was this necessity that largely accounted for Napoleon's policy with regard to Portugal and Spain. There were, however, other places which were suitable for evading Napoleon's decrees with regard to British goods. Heligoland was annexed by Great Britain, and made a convenient base of operations for smuggling goods into Germany.<sup>1</sup> The Dutch Government, under Napoleon's brother Louis, showed little vigilance in carrying out the Continental System, and ignored an extensive trade clandestinely carried on at her ports till, finally, Napoleon in 1810 had to annex Holland. Nor did Great Britain fail to reply to Napoleon's decrees. Her Government retaliated with various "*Orders in Council*", declaring all the ports from which the British flag was excluded to be in a state of blockade, and forbidding ships to sail to them except under a licence granted by Great Britain or when coming from a British port. Yet Great Britain suffered greatly from Napoleon's measures, especially towards the close of the war.

Undeterred by Napoleon's brilliant successes, Great Britain undertook various military operations against Napoleon and his allies. At various times between 1803 and 1811 she captured from the French the Mauritius and their islands in the West Indies, and from the Dutch their possessions in the East Indies. She anticipated Napoleon's intended seizure of the Danish fleet by bombarding *Copenhagen* (1807) and forcing the Danes to give up their fleet—an act for which Great Britain was bitterly attacked at the time, but which is now generally admitted to have been justifiable. Elsewhere Great Britain was not so successful. Expeditions sent in 1807 to South America to capture Buenos Ayres and to Constantinople to coerce the sultan were failures, as was another dispatched in 1809 to *Walcheren* with the object of destroying the ships and dockyards at Antwerp.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> During the winter 1806-7, the French army, in spite of the Berlin decrees, was clad and shod with British goods imported by the French consuls at Hamburg.

<sup>2</sup> The commanders of the fleet and the army—Sir Richard Strachan and the Earl of



Above all, however, Napoleon's aggression in Portugal and Spain gave the British Government a worthy opportunity, in the summer of 1808, of championing those countries. To Spain, where all the provinces had risen against the king whom Napoleon had set over them, Great Britain sent money and arms; and the Spaniards achieved a great success by forcing eighteen thousand Frenchmen to surrender at *Baylen*. To Portugal Great Britain sent an army under Sir A. Wellesley, which defeated the French at *Vimiero*, and forced them, by the Convention of Cintra, to evacuate Portugal; though that convention aroused considerable indignation in Great Britain, because it allowed the French army to be conveyed back to their homes in France instead of to prisons in England.

Interference of Great Britain in Spain and Portugal, 1808.

Napoleon himself then took up the task of subduing the Peninsula. With a huge army he invaded Spain and occupied Madrid. He was meditating an advance upon the south of Spain and upon Lisbon when Sir John Moore—the new British commander—threatened Napoleon's communications in the north, but “with bridle in hand”, as he said, and ready to retreat at a moment's notice, and “to make a run for it”. Napoleon decided to attack Moore. There followed, on both sides, the most wonderful marching across mountainous country covered with snow and divided by deep defiles, Moore for part of the time keeping an average of seventeen miles a day. Eventually Napoleon left the pursuit to Marshal Soult. Moore got to *Corunna*, and fought there a battle, as a result of which, though he himself was killed, his army was enabled to embark in safety (January, 1809). Moore's daring thrust had lost many a brave life, but nevertheless he had drawn the French away from the south and centre and had spoilt their plans.

Napoleon's campaign in Spain, and Sir John Moore.

Chatham (Pitt's elder brother)—quarrelled, and, after the failure of the expedition, each accused the other of dilatoriness; hence the famous epigram—

“Great Chatham, with his sabre drawn,  
Stood waiting for Sir Richard Strachan;  
Sir Richard, longing to be at 'em,  
Stood waiting for the Earl of Chatham!”



### 3. The Peninsular War and the Fall of Napoleon, 1809-14

After the embarkation of the British troops, Napoleon thought that the Spanish rising was "nearly at an end". But he was to be quickly undeceived, for in April, 1809, Wellesley arrived in the Peninsula for the second time. With Wellesley's operations the campaigns known in our history as the *Peninsular War* really begin. The difficulties which Wellesley had to overcome were very great. Opinion at home was much divided as to the expediency of the war and the abilities of Wellesley himself; consequently he had to be cautious—"if I lost five hundred men without the clearest necessity", he said, "I should be brought to my knees". The British officers with him were for the most part at first inexperienced; the men were sometimes six months in arrears of pay, and for four campaigns had to do without tents. Of the British allies, the Portuguese, till trained by the British, were untrustworthy. The Spaniards waged a guerrilla warfare, it is true, so successfully against the French that the latter, though they had as many as three hundred thousand men in the field, were never able to concentrate more than seventy thousand against Wellesley. But the Spaniards were useless in formal battles; even the best of them, in Wellesley's opinion, would only fire a volley whilst the enemy was out of reach and then run away.

It has been said of the Peninsula that it is a country where "large armies starve and small armies get beaten". The country was mountainous, and the roads instead of following ran across the river valleys. Consequently it was difficult to get food or transport for a large army for any length of time; and the art of war consisted in the ability to concentrate rapidly a large army for a swift and decisive blow. The French generals, however, found greater difficulties from the nature of the country than did Wellington. They had to operate in the main down the ribs of a fan, down the river valleys, and they found it difficult to move from one valley to another. Their lines of communication, owing







to the hostile population, were always precarious, and the farther the French went, the more difficult it was to secure them. The English, on the other hand, had their communications by sea. They could thus avoid lengthening their lines, whilst when strong enough to take the offensive they could strike at the communications of the French and compel—as Moore in the Corunna campaign and Wellington in the Vittoria campaign—the French to retreat.

Wellesley had as his opponents in the Peninsular War generals trained by Napoleon, who pursued tactics that had been eminently successful when employed by that master of the art of war. Briefly, Napoleon's tactics at French and British tactics. this time were to concentrate his artillery fire upon the point selected for attack; and then to throw at the weak spot either a great mass of cavalry or else a great mass of infantry in columns of nine, eighteen, or, as at Waterloo, twenty-four deep, the columns being preceded by a cloud of nimble skirmishers who occupied the enemy's attention. Wellesley's genius, however, was equal to these tactics. First, in order to preserve his troops from the enemy's fire, he kept his troops till the last possible moment out of sight—behind a wall, for instance, or the crest of a hill. Secondly, when the French cavalry charged, he relied on the solidity of a British square. But when he was fighting the French infantry column, he had his men in line, two deep. This formation, so long as it remained steady, had great advantages; through its length it could outflank the enemy, and it could pour at a closely massed column a deadly fire to which only the leading files of a column could reply.<sup>1</sup> The British line would fire one or two volleys at short range, so short that the soldiers often waited to see the white of their enemies' eyes before firing. They would follow up this attack with a bayonet charge before the enemy had time to recover, and then retire to await a fresh charge from the forces opposed to them.

Wellesley made his presence felt immediately after his arrival in Portugal in 1809. He found his enemies superior in numbers

<sup>1</sup> Wellesley took care to prevent his own line being outflanked, and protected it in front by a powerful line of skirmishers, so that the skirmishers of the enemy should not harass it.



but divided. Marching eighty miles in three and a half days, he crossed the Douro, drove Soult out of Oporto, and chased him into Spain. Then he passed over the Spanish frontier, and in combination with a Spanish army turned upon another French general in the valley of the Tagus. But the slackness of the Spanish general and the arrival of French reinforcements forced him, after winning a two days' battle at *Talavera*, to retire into Portugal instead of advancing upon Madrid. In Portugal for a time Wellesley had to act on the defensive. Napoleon had poured huge reinforcements into Spain and the Spanish armies had suffered severe defeats. And then the French, under Masséna, invaded Portugal in 1810 to drive "the English leopard into the sea".

The Talavera campaign, 1809.

Masséna's invasion of Portugal was a critical moment in the history of Europe; for if Wellesley had been expelled from that country, it seems not improbable that Great Britain would have yielded to Napoleon. Our intervention in the Peninsula had been fiercely attacked by many of the leading politicians of the day. The nation was tired of the continual failure of our continental expeditions, and regarded Napoleon as invincible. Moreover, owing to the increasing rigour of the Continental System, there was much distress in England, and the nation was greatly depressed. But Wellesley had devised a new and original plan against Masséna's forces. Lisbon—his base—stood upon a peninsula. For the last six months Wellesley's engineers, aided by the peasantry of the district, had been secretly protecting the neck of that peninsula with three lines of defence—the famous "*lines of Torres Vedras*". These lines—the first of which was twenty-nine miles long—had been made with great ingenuity: in one place a river had been dammed to make a great lake, elsewhere the hills had been scarped so as to make them precipitous, the ravines filled with barricades of trees, and redoubts had been built at regular intervals for the guns. Meanwhile the inhabitants from the whole district in front of these lines had been ordered to destroy or carry away their foodstuffs and to retire either to Lisbon or to the mountains.

The Lines of Torres Vedras, 1810-1.

In 1810 Wellesley, after defeating Masséna at *Busaco*, retired behind these lines. Masséna, who only heard of the



existence of these defences five days before he arrived in front of them, found the first line impregnable, and the whole country round absolutely denuded of supplies. For a month he remained outside these lines; for nearly five more he stayed in Portugal, but his men suffered terribly from sickness and hunger, and he finally retired from the country back to Spain in the spring of 1811 with his object unattained and with twenty-five thousand less men than when he had entered it. Wellington was now able to advance. But he did nothing decisive in 1811, though two victories were secured, the one by Wellington at *Fuentes d'Onoro*, and the other by Beresford, through the magnificent charging of two Fusilier regiments, at *Albuera*.<sup>1</sup>

With 1812 came the beginning of the end of Napoleon's omnipotence. Russia had been gradually drifting apart from Napoleon and had been so hard hit by the Continental System that she had practically abandoned it.

Napoleon's  
Russian  
campaign,  
1812.

It was essential to Napoleon's policy that the system should be upheld, and he determined to invade Russia. History has few greater tragedies to record than the fate of Napoleon's expedition. Before he started, Napoleon received the homage of kings and princes at a brilliant gathering in Dresden. He then entered Russia with an army of over six hundred thousand men—a larger and more motley army than any seen since the time of Xerxes. After fighting a most murderous battle at *Borodino*, he entered the old capital of Russia, Moscow—but only to find it a deserted city, whilst on his arrival large parts of it were set on fire by incendiaries. After a brief stay he decided to retire, and on his return journey had to endure the awful rigours of a Russian winter and the pitiless and persistent attacks of the Russian cavalry. Less than sixty thousand of his troops eventually recrossed the Russian frontier in fighting condition. Napoleon himself left his troops before the end and hurried home accompanied by only three companions, and finally returned to Paris in a hackney coach.

Meantime, Wellington was able to take the offensive and to

<sup>1</sup> "They were bad soldiers," was the French commander's comment upon the British at Albuera: "they were completely beaten, the day was mine, and yet they did not know it and would not run."



invade Spain, Napoleon having withdrawn many of his troops for the Russian campaign. The two main routes into Spain were guarded by the fortresses of *Ciudad Rodrigo* and *Badajoz*; Wellington captured the one in eleven and the other in sixteen days. Then, at *Salamanca*, if he did not, as is usually said, "beat forty thousand Frenchmen in forty minutes", he fell with such vigour upon a force which the French had detached to cut off his line of retreat that he routed it in under that time, and afterwards defeated the main body. As a result Joseph fled from Madrid, and Soult retired from Andalusia. Wellington for a time occupied Madrid, and then went north to *Burgos*; but with an insufficient siege train he was unable to take it, and he was forced into a retreat which cost thousands of lives. The result of the campaign was, however, that Southern Spain was freed from the French.

Wellington's  
campaign  
in 1812.

The year 1812 saw not only great events in Russia and Spain, but also the coming into office of one of the most famous of British Foreign Secretaries—Lord Castlereagh. For ten years—from March, 1812, to July, 1822—he was responsible for the conduct of Foreign Affairs. From 1812-14 he was untiring in his efforts, first, to build up, and then to maintain, a coalition against France. In both aims he was successful; but it was due more to him than anyone else that a coalition, which included, besides Great Britain, Russia, Prussia, Sweden, and, a little later, Austria, remained united till Napoleon was finally defeated.

In 1813 the French forces in the Peninsula were still further reduced, to provide Napoleon with an army to fight in Germany. Wellington therefore was able to develop a brilliantly offensive campaign. By keeping a large force threatening the French right and rear, he drove back the French army in six weeks from *Salamanca* to *Vittoria*, and at the latter place was able by his superiority in numbers not only to defeat the French but to cut off their retreat by the main road. Joseph and the remnants of his army had to escape as best they could by a rough mule track.<sup>1</sup> There followed

The campaign  
of Vittoria and  
the War of the  
Pyrenees, 1813.

<sup>1</sup> Amongst other things Wellington captured some valuable Spanish pictures which Joseph was taking out of Spain. At the end of the war Wellington offered to return them to the King of Spain, but the king generously gave them to Wellington, and they are now at Apsley House.



what is known as the *War of the Pyrenees*. Soult had been sent by Napoleon to reorganize the army against Wellington, but, though he fought skilfully, he failed to prevent either the storming of San Sebastian or the surrender of Pampeluna, and before the end of the year Wellington had crossed the French frontier and was threatening Bayonne. Meanwhile our allies had been fighting Napoleon in Germany. After a series of battles they finally overwhelmed him at Leipzig and drove him back to the French frontier.

With 1814 the end came. In South-Western France Soult retreated eastward so as to be able to threaten Wellington's flank if he went north, or to draw him away from his true base, the sea, if he followed. Wellington chose the latter course, and won the battles of *Orthes* and *Toulouse*. But before Toulouse was fought, the war was really over, as the Allies, invading Eastern France in overwhelming numbers, had advanced upon Paris and had forced Napoleon to abdicate. The Peninsular War had been of inestimable importance. It cost Napoleon, according to Wellington's calculations, not far short of half a million men; Napoleon himself called it a "running sore"—a constant drain of money and men. It re-established the prestige of the British army, and it gave Spain the opportunity of showing that no despot, however powerful, can trample upon the independence of a proud nation.

So after close on twenty years of war France was beaten back to her own borders. The reasons of her success for the time and her eventual failure lie deeper than the genius of Napoleon and the counterbalancing dogged accuracy of Wellington—the compensation which Fate gave us<sup>1</sup>—they lie in what is greater than great men, namely great ideas. At the beginning France stood as the champion of *Liberty*. Hence, wherever the invading French went, they were more or less welcomed as liberators by

<sup>1</sup> Both generals were born in 1769. "Fate owed us this compensation" was the comment subsequently made. Curiously enough, they were both at school in France at the same time; Wellington at Angers and Napoleon at Brienne. They received their first commissions within a few months of each other in 1785-6, and also their lieutenant-colonelcies. They ended their fighting careers on the same day. But they never met, though it is believed that Wellington caught sight of Napoleon through his glass at Waterloo.



the people. This was so in Italy, and Holland, and Germany. Thus the resistance in these countries was often half-hearted. Briefly, it was the new ideas of the Revolution fighting against kings and princes, representatives of the old despotism—and the kings were beaten. As time went on, however, it was revealed that the French did not practise what they preached. They made “war support war”: they lived at free quarters in the countries they nominally came to set free, and a taste of this soon lost the favour they had at first won. Napoleon made the change plain. A despot himself, his armies rapidly became the oppressors of Europe instead of its liberators, and this soon bred a national hostility to him. It could not work at once, because his armies were so enormously superior. But this feeling of *Patriotism*, which he roused everywhere against him—indeed almost created in Germany—triumphed in the end. So in the contest of the peoples of Europe against one despot, Napoleon was bound to go down. Rightly is the fight of Leipzig (his first great defeat in a pitched battle) called the *Völkerschlacht*, “The Fight of the Nations”. It was national patriotism which crushed him.

The same fact is revealed in another way. At first all the wars which France had to wage in Europe were short. Austria was the only country which kept up a fairly continuous war, and even she had made peace four times before Leipzig. Shattering defeats at Rivoli, Marengo, and Hohenlinden, Austerlitz and Wagram brought her to the ground. Of the others, Prussia and Russia joined for brief periods; Spain and the German States wavered now to one side, now to the other. Great Britain alone was constant, but at first could find no decisive point of attack. Victories at sea and the capturing of colonies could not end the war. But when she found and fostered a national spirit of resistance in Portugal and Spain, Napoleon's downfall began. The Peninsular War is the first *long* war with which he had to grapple, and he could not end it, partly because of the patriotic, though guerrilla, warfare which Spain fought, and partly because he could not strike at the heart of the sea-power which supported Spain. His troops entered every European capital;<sup>1</sup> but they could not

<sup>1</sup> Except Constantinople, Christiania and Stockholm, and St. Petersburg; but they reached Moscow.



reach London. And so the long struggle in Spain gave Europe time to rally.

Meantime, whilst Wellington was fighting in the Peninsula, Great Britain found herself involved in a new war. The "Continental System" and the British retaliatory measures had placed the United States and other neutral countries in an almost intolerable position.

War between  
Great Britain  
and the  
United States,  
1812-4.

A neutral ship, if it was sailing to or from a British port, might be seized by the French; if it was not, it might be seized by the British. Moreover, the British had searched United States merchant vessels, and even on one occasion a United States war vessel, for British seamen who had joined American ships to avoid being impressed into British men-of-war. Disputes led to war being declared in 1812. In the earlier stages of the war, though Captain Broke in the *Shannon* upheld our prestige by causing the American frigate *Chesapeake* to surrender in fifteen minutes, the American frigates—so equipped as to be almost ships of the line—won many successes over the lighter-armed British frigates; and United States privateers took some five hundred British merchantmen in seven months. The land operations of the United States across the Canadian frontier were, however, a failure. The Canadians, whether of French or of British descent, combined with the British regulars to resist the invasion, and fought with great courage and persistency. Eventually Great Britain, in 1814, after Napoleon's abdication, was able to send a large fleet and her Peninsular veterans to America. Washington was taken, but an attack upon New Orleans failed, and peace was made at the end of the year.

#### 4. The "Hundred Days", 1815

Napoleon, on his abdication, had been given Elba—a small island off Tuscany—to rule as an independent principality.

The Congress of  
Vienna, and  
Napoleon's return  
from Elba, 1815.

Meanwhile the Bourbon line in the person of Louis XVIII—a brother of Louis XVI—had been restored in France, and a great Congress—in which Lord Castlereagh represented Great Britain—was held at *Vienna* to settle the affairs of Europe. The congress



had not completed its labours when suddenly it heard of Napoleon's return to France. The temporary absence of the British frigate which watched Elba had enabled Napoleon to escape and to land in France with eight hundred men. He was received in France by his old soldiers with enthusiasm, and reached Paris on March 20, 1815, without so much as firing a shot. Then begins the period known in history as that of "*the Hundred Days*". Louis XVIII had to fly. Napoleon reconstituted the Government, and announced that he was going to pursue a policy of peace toward other countries and to grant liberal institutions to France. But the allies put no trust in Napoleon's promises. The Congress of Vienna outlawed him, and declared him to be an enemy and disturber of the peace of the world. Each of the big powers—Great Britain, Austria, Russia, and Prussia—undertook to supply a hundred and fifty thousand soldiers, whilst Great Britain as usual was to provide subsidies.

The plan of the allies was to make a joint advance upon Paris. But in June only the British and Prussians were ready. In Belgium, Wellington had about eighty-five thousand men under his command; one-third were British (very few of whom had seen any service before), one-third Germans, and one-third Dutch Belgians. Blücher, the Prussian general, commanded some hundred and twenty-four thousand Germans. Wellington and Blücher were acting in concert, and their combined armies were spread over a very much-extended line, not far short of a hundred miles in length, and some miles away from the French frontier. Napoleon's idea was to make a sudden and unexpected attack on the centre of the allied line; this would enable him to push his own forces like a wedge between Wellington and Blücher, and, as their bases lay in opposite directions, the one to the west and the other to the east, to defeat them in detail. Leaving Paris on June 12, Napoleon marched to the frontier, passed through Charleroi, and by the evening of the 15th he himself was in front of part of the Prussian forces which lay at Ligny, whilst Ney, his chief commander, was some seven miles farther west at Quatre Bras, where some of Wellington's troops were posted.

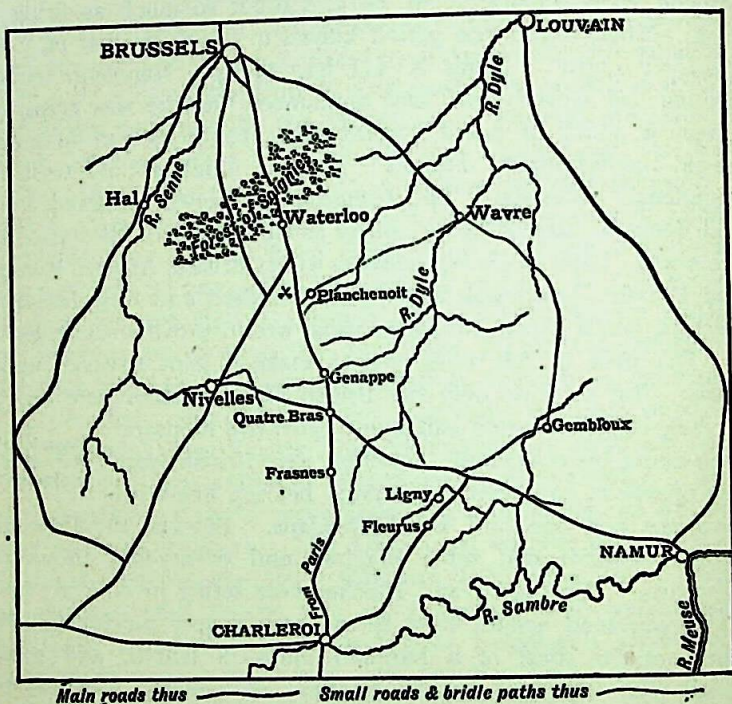
"It was the finest thing ever done," said Wellington of

Napoleon's  
plan of  
campaign.



Napoleon's performance, "so rapid was it and so well combined." The allies were surprised and outmanœuvred; but, fortunately for them, both Napoleon and Ney wasted the morning of the 16th, and this delay enabled Blücher and Wellington—the latter of whom had attended the

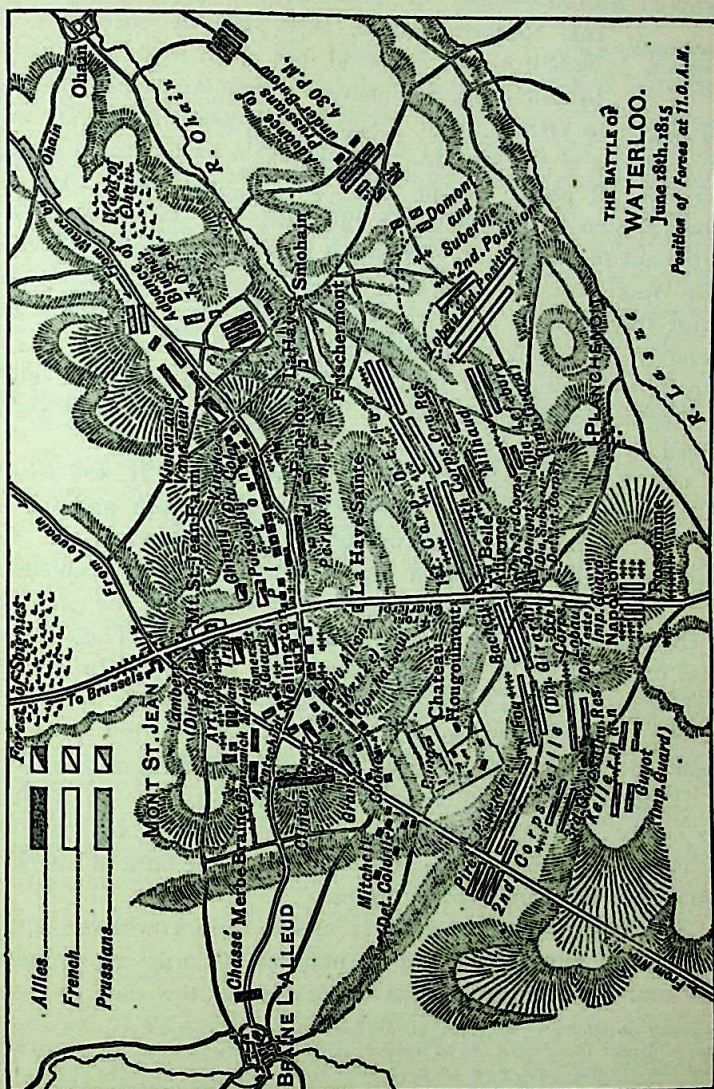
Ligny and  
Quatre Bras,  
June 16.



Duchess of Richmond's famous ball at Brussels on the previous evening—to concentrate a large part of their forces. In the afternoon of the 16th came two battles. Napoleon beat the Prussians at Ligny. Ney at first crumpled up Wellington's lines at Quatre Bras, but the stubbornness of the British soldiers, and the fact that Napoleon had withdrawn, without Ney's knowledge, part of Ney's right wing to assist in Blücher's downfall, led to his final repulse.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Duke of Wellington had a very long day on the 16th. He left Brussels in the morning, and rode out beyond Quatre Bras; then he visited Blücher at Ligny, and warned him of







The day after these two battles—the 17th of June—was occupied with marches. At dawn the Prussians retreated, not east towards Namur, their base of operations, as Napoleon had expected, but north in order to keep in touch with Wellington. About ten o'clock Wellington began to retreat north. Napoleon himself, worn out with the exertions of the previous few days, again wasted the morning, and not till about 2 p.m. did Grouchy, one of Napoleon's generals, start in pursuit of the Prussians, and Napoleon himself in pursuit of Wellington. Nightfall found Wellington in position near Waterloo and Napoleon's troops, beginning to arrive there, whilst the Prussian army was sixteen miles away at Wavre, and Grouchy, who had only just discovered the Prussian line of retreat, was some way to the south of it. During the night Wellington received promise of help from Blücher and determined to hold his ground.<sup>1</sup>

On the 18th came the battle of Waterloo. It was fought in an undulating country green with growing corn and clover, and the ground was saturated with heavy rain. Wellington's forces lay on one slope, and Napoleon's on another, a shallow valley separating the positions of the two armies, which were about a mile apart. The distance from one flank to the other in each army was about three miles. Wellington placed his troops on the side of the slope away from the French, so as to be out of sight. To his front were two detached points. To his right front was the farm and orchard of Hougoumont, which were held by the Guards. In front of his centre, flanking the Charleroi-Brussels road, which ran like a spit through the centre of both armies, was the farm of La Haye Sainte, defended by German troops.

The battle began soon after eleven o'clock with an attack on Hougoumont, but twelve hundred Guardsmen repulsed this and subsequent attacks made during the day by some the dangerous position he had taken up. He had therefore ridden over forty miles before the battle of Quatre Bras began, and he remained in the saddle till nightfall. A general officer found him late that night, when his troops were asleep, chuckling over some English newspapers which had just arrived!

<sup>1</sup> It is said that the Duke of Wellington himself rode over to Wavre during the night of the 17th, and got personal assurance of support from Blücher—but the story lacks confirmation. He received a message anyway before dawn on the 18th.



ten thousand French troops. There followed, about 1.30, an artillery attack, which was the prelude to a great infantry advance of D'Erlon's corps, twenty-four battalions in four columns, each twenty-four deep, against Wellington's left and left centre. But Wellington's infantry, and Picton's brigade in particular, shattered the heads of the columns with its volleys and charged. Then the British cavalry completed the rout of the French infantry—though they suffered severely by charging too far. About 4 p.m. came renewed attacks by the French, this time on Wellington's right centre. The British and Hanoverian regiments had to form square to resist a succession of magnificent charges, some fifteen or sixteen in number, made by the French cavalry, whilst in the intervals of these charges they came under the fire of the French skirmishers and artillery. La Haye Sainte was vigorously attacked, and lack of ammunition caused its defenders about 6.30 p.m. to surrender.

This was the crisis of the battle; if fresh reinforcements had been sent by Napoleon, Wellington's centre might have been pierced. But meanwhile the Prussians had kept their promise—though somewhat tardily, for they should have arrived at noon and did not arrive till 4.30—and, unmolested by Grouchy, who was still some miles away, captured *Plancenoit* on Napoleon's right. Not till it was recaptured did Napoleon give orders for the last great charge of the French—the charge of the Guard—against Wellington's right and centre. This was at 7.15 p.m., and by that time another column of the Prussians had attached itself to Wellington's left flank and allowed him to reinforce his centre and right. The charge of the French Guard was triumphantly repulsed, and the Prussians then undertook the pursuit of the defeated French army.<sup>1</sup> Napoleon's cause was now hopeless. On June 22 he abdicated, and subsequently surrendered

<sup>1</sup> The Duke described the battle in a letter: "Never did I see such a pounding match. Both were what the boxers call gluttons. Napoleon did not manœuvre at all; he just moved forward in the old style, in columns, and was driven off in the old style. . . . I never saw the British infantry behave so well." To someone else the Duke described the battle, the day after it was fought, "as the nearest run thing you ever saw in your life". It is said that a Guardsman confessed to having felt bored at the battle of Waterloo; but, on the other hand, a boy of fourteen, who had left Eton to take part in the campaign, wrote to his mother after the battle was over: "Dear Mamma, Cousin Tom and I are all right. I never saw anything like it in my life."



to the commander of a British man-of-war, and was sent by the British Government as a prisoner to St. Helena, where he died six years later (1821).

In conclusion we must glance at the territorial arrangements begun at the *Congress of Vienna* before Napoleon's escape from Elba, and completed after the battle of Waterloo by the *Treaty of Paris*. It was mainly due to Castlereagh that

The Treaty  
of Paris,  
1815.

France was not treated vindictively, and that the most thorny problems were finally settled on a basis of compromise. Of her conquests, Great Britain kept Malta, the Mauritius, and the Cape of Good Hope—the potential value of which was not then realized. France kept, with small differences, the boundaries she possessed before the Revolution broke out. Belgium—or the Austrian Netherlands—was joined to Holland. The Czar was given a large part of Poland, Prussia obtained half of Saxony and large districts on the Rhine, and Austria got Lombardy and Venetia. The German States—now thirty-nine in number—were formed into a Confederacy under the presidency of Austria. To Spain and the Italian States their old rulers were returned.

## XLI. Domestic Affairs, 1760-1815

We must now deal with the domestic history of Great Britain, from the accession of George III till the battle of Waterloo. The two most conspicuous features of that period are: first, the great development of trade and industry, the history of which is dealt with later; and, secondly, the series of great wars, the story of which we have already told. Great Britain during this period was almost continuously at war. She enjoyed a period of repose for twelve years between 1763 and 1775, and for ten years between 1783 and 1793; but public attention during a great part of the first of these intervals was occupied with the American controversy, and for the later years of the second with the French Revolution. Home politics, therefore, are somewhat unimportant, and the period is one, so far as legislation is concerned, of stagnation. The chief interest of the earlier part of George III's reign lies in the attempt of the king to free himself

1760-1815,  
Character  
of period.



from Whig control, and of the later part in the administration and personality of the younger Pitt.

George III, the grandson of George II, was throughout his reign a popular monarch. And in many ways he deserved his popularity. He was a thorough gentleman. He was a devoted husband, and except when his sons were at fault—and they often were—an affectionate father. He was simple in all his tastes, sincere in his religion, and imperturbably brave.<sup>1</sup> He was not without interests in art and literature; his library was a magnificent one, and most of the drawings at Windsor were purchased by him, whilst he had a fine collection of miniatures and gems. Moreover, having been born and educated in Great Britain, he could glory, as he said, in the name of "Briton", whilst his fondness for the public schools, his devotion to hunting,<sup>2</sup> and his keenness as a farmer showed that he shared the interests of the Englishmen of his day. But his education had been inadequate, and he could hardly be considered a learned monarch; his English was ungrammatical, his spelling inaccurate, and his stock of general knowledge somewhat slender, whilst he is said to have expressed an opinion that Shakespeare wrote "much sad stuff".<sup>3</sup> Moreover, he had been brought up in great seclusion by his German mother, and suffered from an inability to see anybody's point of view but his own. Consequently he was ignorant and bigoted in his opinions, and self-confident and obstinate in upholding them; and it is melancholy to think that a monarch in many ways so estimable should have spent a long life, as has been said, in obstinately resisting measures which are now almost universally admitted to be good, and in supporting measures which are as universally admitted to be bad. To him, perhaps more than to anyone else, does Great Britain owe the loss of her American colonies, the failure to pacify Ireland, the delay of

<sup>1</sup> Not even a shot fired at him as he was entering his box at a theatre prevented him from enjoying his usual nap during the interval between the play and the afterpiece.

<sup>2</sup> He was so fond of riding that even when he was blind he used to take long rides in Windsor Park, accompanied by a groom with a leading-rein.

<sup>3</sup> It is worth remembering, however, that George III, when recovering from his first attack of insanity, asked for *King Lear*. That same evening, on seeing his three eldest daughters, he said of the play: "It is very beautiful, very affecting, very awful. I am like poor Lear, but, thank God, I have no Regan, no Goneril, only three Cordelias."



parliamentary reform, and the long continuance of the slave trade. Yet it must be remembered in his defence that the views which he held were those of the average Englishman of that day, and the blame must be shared by the king and his subjects alike.

George came to the throne determined to govern as well as to reign. "George, be a king", were the words which his German mother, so it is said, constantly repeated to him. And a real king George was determined to be. For such an attempt the time was opportune. Some distinguished men, such as Bolingbroke, had advocated during the reign of his predecessor that the monarchy should recover its lost power. The king could rely on the devoted support of the Tories, who were by this time completely reconciled to the Hanoverian dynasty.<sup>1</sup> And through places and pensions and secret service money—though the amount of this has been exaggerated—he could influence many votes, whilst a body of people known as the "king's friends" were prepared in the House of Lords to act according to his wishes. George meant to choose his ministers from any party or group that he liked—and also to dismiss them; and this, of course, he could do so long as these ministers could command a majority in the House of Commons.

The king, however, had to depend largely upon the Whig oligarchy with their family connections and their long experience of government during the first few years of his reign. But the Whigs were divided among themselves, and George could change one ministry for another without difficulty if it conflicted with his views—there were no less than seven during the first ten years of his reign. Within a year of the king's accession the ministry which had conducted the Seven Years' War with such success came to an end. *Pitt* resigned because his colleagues in the cabinet refused to go to war with Spain, and things were made so uncomfortable for *Newcastle* that he followed *Pitt*'s example six months later.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Burke said of the Tories on George III's accession: "They had changed their idol but preserved their idolatry".

<sup>2</sup> Most of the bishops had received their sees from Newcastle, and had been regular and obsequious attendants at his levees, but on his fall they thought it prudent to abstain from attending in the future. "Even fathers in God", was Newcastle's comment, "sometimes forget their Maker."



Lord *Bute*, formerly the king's tutor, and therefore largely responsible for his views, then obtained the chief power; but he retired after effecting the Treaty of Paris, which ended the Seven Years' War, as he preferred to influence Bute, 1762-3. affairs from the background, and was by intellect and experience quite unfitted to govern the country. Moreover, he was extremely unpopular in England, partly because he was a Scot and partly because he was considered a favourite of the queen-mother, and he had actually been obliged to enrol a bodyguard composed of butchers and boxers for his personal protection in London.<sup>1</sup>

*George Grenville*, a Whig lawyer, very hard-working but somewhat pedantic, succeeded as prime minister in 1763. With his ministry is connected the unfortunate Stamp Act (p. 501). This aroused, however, far less Grenville, 1763-5. attention at the time than the arrest by a "general warrant" (i.e. one in which no names are mentioned) of "the authors, printers, and publishers" of No. 45 of a certain paper called the *North Briton*. That paper had published criticism of a somewhat stringent character on the King's Speech at the opening of the session, a speech which as usual was only read and not composed by the king. The writer of the criticism happened to be a certain Wilkes, well known as a member of Parliament; public opinion was on his side and considered general warrants illegal, and the Government became unpopular. Grenville also, by his pertinacious and tiresome loquacity,<sup>2</sup> had made himself disliked by the king; and consequently he had to resign in 1765. "I would sooner meet Mr. Grenville", the king is reported to have said a little later, "at the point of my sword than let him into my cabinet." And Grenville was never to hold office again.

To Grenville succeeded another Whig in *Lord Rockingham*. He and his followers were high-principled politicians, and it was a great disaster to the nation that Rockingham, 1765-6.

<sup>1</sup> Bute's ministry was notorious for its bribery; on one morning, it is said, no less than £25,000 was expended in purchasing votes.

<sup>2</sup> "When he has wearied me for two hours," the king complained, "he looks at his watch to see if he may not tire me for one hour more."



Pitt, whose gout led him to take a less and less continuous part in public affairs, and made him more difficult to deal with, would not consent to serve under him. This ministry repealed the Stamp Act and declared "general warrants" illegal; but as a consequence it incurred the hostility of the king, and was dismissed after lasting just over a year (1766).

In Pitt (now created Earl of Chatham), the new prime minister, George III found a statesman more congenial to him, Chatham,  
1766-8. for Pitt was hostile to all parties, and declared his intention of governing according to the king's wishes.

But illness soon incapacitated him, and it was then that Townshend, the chancellor of the exchequer, reopened the American question by his foolish duties (see p. 502). In composition Chatham's ministry was, as a contemporary described it, "a piece of mosaic", made up of politicians from different factions, and on Chatham's final retirement from office, in 1768, the ministry was left—if the change of metaphor may be allowed—like

Grafton,  
1768-70. a ship without a rudder. The *Duke of Grafton*, a young man of thirty-two, who succeeded Chatham as the leader of the ministry, was a person of "lounging opinions", and more at home on a racecourse than at a cabinet meeting. During Grafton's tenure of power the House of Commons, under the leadership of his ministry, expelled Wilkes for having written to a newspaper a letter which both Houses declared to be libellous. The county of Middlesex, however, continued to elect him, and the House of Commons kept on expelling him. But at length, on the fourth occasion, the House of Commons declared his opponent to be elected,<sup>1</sup> a flagrantly unconstitutional action which produced a dangerous riot, Wilkes being a popular hero. For this and other actions Grafton and the ministry were unsparingly attacked in some letters—the *Letters of Junius*—the authorship of which is still disputed, and which had considerable influence at the time.<sup>2</sup> Finally, the

<sup>1</sup> Wilkes, on the fourth occasion, had received 1143 votes and his opponent only 296. But the House decided that his opponent "ought to have been elected", and therefore declared him the duly elected member.

<sup>2</sup> No writer, it has been said, ever surpassed "Junius" in condensed and virulent invective. Amongst others, Lord George Sackville, Grattan, Burke, Gibbon, Lord Chatham, Lord Temple, the brother of George Grenville, and Sir Philip Francis have been credited with the authorship of the letters; the two last-named seem to be the least unlikely.



ministry was criticized by Chatham, its former leader, for its foreign policy, and Grafton accordingly resigned in 1770.

At last George obtained the minister he wanted, and for the next twelve years, from 1770 to 1782, he was largely his own prime minister. The nominal head of the Government was *Lord North*, a good-humoured, easygoing, tactful person, who was quite content to leave the initiative

*The King and Lord North, 1770-82.*

in policy and even the details of administration to the king.<sup>1</sup> The chief interest of this Government lies in its policy towards the American colonies (p. 502). With large majorities in both Houses,<sup>2</sup> with its policy approved by the nation, with the enthusiastic support of the Tories, and only a divided Whig opposition to attack it, the position of the ministry was for long unassailable. The disasters and mismanagement of the American War, however, finally led to great dissatisfaction. The growing power of George III was regarded with alarm, and in 1780 a motion was carried in the House of Commons that the "influence of the Crown has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished". In the same year came a formidable ultra-Protestant riot, owing to an Act of Parliament repealing some of the laws against the Roman Catholics; its leader was Lord George Gordon, and all London east of Charing Cross was at the mercy of a mob, till George III himself ordered the troops to disperse the people without waiting to read the Riot Act.<sup>3</sup> The proposal of a similar Bill for Scotland, granting concessions to the Roman Catholics, aroused such an uproar in that country that it had to be abandoned. Finally, in 1782,

<sup>1</sup> On two occasions the king actually summoned and presided over a cabinet meeting, delivering on the first occasion a "discourse" which "took up near an hour in delivering".

<sup>2</sup> The king always took a very active interest in elections, but especially at this period. Thus one of the members for the city of London died in 1779; at "forty-two minutes past 6 p.m." on the same day that the member died the king wrote to Lord North about the vacancy. In the election of 1774, Lord North, acting for the king, bought the six seats in Cornwall which Lord Falmouth controlled, for 2500 guineas each, Lord North complaining that Lord Falmouth was "rather shabby in desiring guineas rather than pounds"; whilst at Windsor—which at that time was hostile to the ministry—the king had six houses, which he rented in the town, entered in the names of six of his servants so as to create six votes in his favour.

<sup>3</sup> For four days London was in the hands of the mob; Newgate prison was destroyed, and its 300 prisoners released; Roman Catholic chapels were burnt; and a distillery was attacked, with the result that immense casks of spirits were broken, and many of the mob were killed by drinking too much. The leader, Lord George Gordon, eventually became a Jew and died a madman.



after the capitulation of Yorktown and the loss of Minorca, Lord North insisted upon resigning—to the great disgust of the king, who never forgave him for this “desertion”, as he called it; “remember, my Lord,” said the king on parting from him, “that it is you who desert me, not I you”.

On Lord North's fall, in 1782, the Whigs again returned to power. By this time many of the older politicians, such as

The Whig  
leaders,  
1782.

Newcastle, Grenville, and Chatham (d. 1778), had died. Lord Rockingham was, however, still alive, and the other most prominent Whigs were Shelburne, Fox, and Burke. *Shelburne* was a man of great ability and great foresight, but he was much distrusted, and known as *Shelburne*.

“the Jesuit of Berkeley Square”. The truth seems to have been that though, as a distinguished writer has said, his conduct was always exemplary, it was always in need of explanation, and was consequently apt to be misunderstood, whilst his speeches were often ambiguous and liable to misinterpretation.

*Charles James Fox* was a strange mixture of virtues and vices. He has been described as the most genial of all associates and the most beloved of all friends. He was a great lover of literature, and read through his Homer, it was said, every year. He was energetic in all that he did, whether in taking writing lessons when secretary of state to improve his handwriting, or in swimming and cricket, and he became, through constant practice, an incomparable debater.<sup>1</sup> Yet he ran through a fortune by gambling before he was twenty-four, and was the leader of every sort of extravagant fashion—including red-heeled shoes and blue hair-powder. His political life was varied. Beginning as a Tory and a member of Lord North's ministry, he became a Whig during the American War, and developed into a Radical as a supporter of the French Revolution. He might be called the founder of the Liberal Party, as he bridged the gap between the old Whig Party and the new Whigs who pressed for Parliamentary Reform. Whatever views he held he supported

<sup>1</sup> In one session he spoke at every sitting except one, and he always regretted that he had abstained from speaking on that occasion.



passionately. As a statesman, however, he failed to gain the confidence of the king or of the nation, and from the time he left the Tory ministry, in 1774, till the time of his death, in 1806, he was only in office for twenty months.

Of *Edmund Burke* it has been said that, "Bacon alone excepted, he was the greatest political thinker that has ever devoted himself to the practice of English politics". Burke. An Irishman by birth, and educated at Dublin University, he became, when thirty-six years of age, secretary to Lord Rockingham, and a Whig member of Parliament (1765). He was a keen Whig and a great writer and talker. His speeches had enormous influence; for all politicians read them, though members of Parliament did not always listen to them, as they were long and awkwardly delivered.<sup>1</sup> Possessed of wonderful knowledge, he formed opinions which posterity has agreed were generally right. Thus he was in favour of a policy of conciliation with the American colonies; he supported the claims of the Roman Catholics for emancipation, and of the Dissenters for complete toleration; he wished to reform the penal code and the debtors laws; and he attacked the slave trade. But though he wished to diminish the corruption of Parliament, he was a great admirer of the British constitution as it then existed, and he was opposed to any extension of the franchise or redistribution of the constituencies. Moreover, he had a great horror of any violent reforms, and hence became an impassioned opponent of the French Revolution, as was shown in his "Reflections" upon it.

Samuel Johnson once said that Burke and Chatham were the only two men he knew who had risen considerably above the common standard, and it is an extraordinary thing that Burke should never have had a seat in any cabinet. He did not, however, belong to one of the governing families, and his Irish extraction made Englishmen inclined to distrust him. Moreover, his judgment was occasionally warped to such an extent by his imagination, as in the charges which he brought

<sup>1</sup> Burke spoke with a strong Irish accent, his gestures were clumsy, and his delivery was described as execrable. Yet of one of his speeches in the Warren Hastings impeachment a contemporary wrote, "Burke did not, I believe, leave a dry eye in the whole assembly."



against Warren Hastings, that it became entirely unreliable. But of his writings one of the greatest English historians has said, "The time may come when they may no longer be read; the time will never come in which men will not grow the wiser by reading them".

On the resignation of Lord North in 1782 the Whigs returned to power for a time, but their ministries were shortlived, and prime ministers followed one another in quick succession during the next two years. The first prime minister was *Lord Rockingham*. His ministry was able to accomplish two things before its leader died. It granted to Ireland an independent Parliament (p. 579). It also passed, through the influence of Burke, a bill to diminish political corruption and the influence of the Crown, by reducing the number of office-holders and the amount of pensions, and by excluding from the franchise revenue officers, who had hitherto formed one-sixth of the electorate and had voted as the Crown wished. *Lord Shelburne* was the next prime minister. He made the treaty which ended the American War. His fall was brought about by a coalition between Fox and Lord North, who both disliked Shelburne. The king was obliged to submit to a new Government in which Fox and North, under the nominal leadership of a "dull dumb duke" (the phrase is Lord Rosebery's), in the person of *Portland*, had the chief influence. That coalition appeared to many to be a discreditable affair, for Fox had attacked Lord North when in office with a virulence which should have made any combination between the two impossible. But it must be remembered that Lord North was placable and easygoing, and that Fox was—Fox.<sup>1</sup>

The coalition was to have but a short life. Public opinion condemned it. The king was violently opposed to both Fox and North, and when the cabinet ministers kissed hands on appointment, a humorous contemporary noticed that George III

<sup>1</sup>There is a story that, during the War of American Independence, after Fox had denounced a member of Lord North's ministry in most scathing terms, Lord North came up to Fox and said laughingly, "I am glad you did not fall on me, Charles, for you were in high feather to-day".



put back his ears and eyes like a recalcitrant horse at Astley's. The ministry produced a bill for the reorganization of the Government of India. Under its terms the government and patronage of that vast dependency would be under the control, for the next four years, of commissioners, all of whom were Fox's supporters. "The bill", as was said at the time, "would take the diadem off the king's head and put it on that of Mr. Fox." But the king saw his chance; a message was sent to the "king's friends" to vote against the bill, which was accordingly thrown out in the House of Lords.<sup>1</sup> The ministry, though it possessed a large majority in the House of Commons, was then dismissed, just before the Christmas of 1783, after an existence of only eight months.

George's new prime minister was a young man of twenty-four, *William Pitt the younger*, the son of the great Earl of Chatham. William Pitt, born in 1759—the great year of Pitt's ministry, 1783-1801. victories—had been brought up to statesmanship from his earliest infancy, and when, after an education at home and at Cambridge,<sup>2</sup> he entered Parliament in 1780, he at once made his mark. After refusing a subordinate place in Lord Rockingham's ministry, he had become chancellor of the exchequer under Lord Shelburne; and he was now made prime minister on December 19, 1783.

Pitt, however, on taking office, had great difficulty in forming a ministry, and being in a minority in the House of Commons his Government was at first looked upon almost as a joke, "as a mince-pie administration", sure to end after the Christmas festivities were over. But Fox and North and their followers who were now in opposition made a mistake. Pitt, despite

<sup>1</sup> The king gave Lord Temple a paper stating that "whoever voted for the bill was not only not his friend but would be considered his enemy; and if these words were not strong enough Earl Temple might use whatever words he might deem stronger and more to the purpose". Armed with this message, Temple had little difficulty in securing the rejection of the bill by a majority of nineteen. This Lord Temple was a son of George Grenville.

<sup>2</sup> William Pitt as a child was very precocious. At the age of seven, when told that his father had been raised to the peerage, he said "that he was glad he was not the eldest son, but that he could serve his country in the House of Commons like his papa". At the age of twelve he wrote his first poem, and when a year older his first play—with a political plot. At the age of fourteen and a half, when he did not weigh much more than six stone, he went to Cambridge—the story, however, that his nurse brought him there in a carriage and stayed to look after him lacks confirmation.



various defeats in the House, held on. His courage and resourcefulness, coupled with the extreme violence of the opposition, won him increased support; and when in April he dissolved Parliament he came back amidst great popular excitement with a decisive majority, no less than one hundred and sixty of Fox's supporters—Fox's martyrs they were called—losing their seats.<sup>1</sup> For the next seventeen years Pitt, trusted alike by the king and the nation, reigned supreme.

With the accession of Pitt, though the king was still able to exercise at times very great influence, his system of personal government came to an end. For one thing, the Pitt and the king. king had a minister whom he trusted; and for another, he could not afford to quarrel with Pitt, for if so he would have been thrown back on the Whig opposition. Moreover, the king's health began to decline. Brain troubles incapacitated him for a time in 1788. Increasing blindness, which became serious in 1805, made him retire more and more from public business. After 1811 the madness which had so long threatened led to his complete withdrawal, the Prince of Wales for the remainder of the reign acting as regent, under conditions, however, which left the chief power with the ministers.

Pitt, during the first ten years of his administration, till the outbreak of the war with France in 1793, was able to do much for his country. As a financier, his only equal was Pitt's policy, 1783-93. Walpole. Although, owing to the Industrial Revolution (Ch. XLIII), times were fairly prosperous, Pitt found our system of national finance very faulty. By simplifying the duties on certain articles, and abolishing and reducing those on others, he not only diminished the opportunities of smuggling, but did a good deal towards remedying the evils of over-protection, the disadvantages of which had been shown in a famous book, Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, published in 1776. Pitt also

<sup>1</sup> The most exciting election was at Westminster, where Fox was a successful candidate. The poll was open for forty days, and there were continual conflicts between a body of seamen whom Fox's naval opponent, Lord Hood, had brought up to London, and the hackney chairmen, who supported Fox. The king, of course, favoured Hood, whilst the Prince of Wales was an active ally of Fox. But Fox's most successful canvasser was the beautiful Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, who really won the election.



made with France a commercial treaty to encourage exports and imports with that country. Moreover, he did something to reduce the National Debt, while his administration was economically conducted.

But for considerable opposition Pitt might have made greater reforms. He brought forward a bill for parliamentary reform, disfranchising some of the small boroughs; but he was defeated.<sup>1</sup> He proposed to establish complete commercial equality between Great Britain and Ireland; but Fox's tongue was too much for the bill. In one matter—in the impeachment of Warren Hastings (1788)—he has been accused of weakness and inconsistency, because he voted in favour of Hastings over the Rohilla charge, and against him on the other charges. But Pitt acted in good faith, and there is no reason to believe, as was often stated, that he was won over to vote against Warren Hastings by his colleague Dundas, who was jealous of Hastings' abilities. It must always be remembered that in the conduct of Indian affairs Pitt carried through an Act for the regulation of India which settled the basis of our government in that country till after the Mutiny of 1857; and that to him was due the appointment of Cornwallis and Wellesley as governors-general.

The second period of Pitt's administration—from 1793 to 1801—is a period of war, in consequence of the French Revolution. The earlier effects of that Revolution upon British politics have already been referred to. When the war broke out, in 1793, all attempts at reform ceased. "One cannot repair one's house in a hurricane," said a contemporary in Pitt's defence, and instead of reform came coercion. For eight years in succession the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended, so that a person could be kept in prison for an indefinite period without being brought up for trial.<sup>2</sup> Bills were passed by which political meetings might be stopped, political societies suppressed, and political refugees from other countries excluded. Yet the great majority of the nation, fearful of a

Influence of  
French War  
upon Pitt,  
1793-1801.

<sup>1</sup> It must be remembered that in those days members of Parliament were far more independent both of their constituents and of the party "whips" than they are now, and they had no hesitation in voting against any measure of which they disapproved; thus in the years 1785-6 Pitt failed to carry three important proposals, and he complained with regard to his supporters that "we are hardly sure from day to day what impressions they may receive".

<sup>2</sup> If they were imprisoned on the charge of treasonable practices.



revolution at home, demanded such measures. The bulk of the Whig opposition, including Burke, joined Pitt in 1793, and the opposition henceforward was confined to Fox and his supporters, who sank to such small numbers that a couple of hackney coaches, it was said, would comfortably contain them. Meantime Pitt was driven to desperate straits for money; enormous taxes were raised, and the National Debt went up by leaps and bounds.

The "gagging" Acts—as the coercive Acts were called—of Pitt can be defended, but other parts of his administration during this period are more difficult to excuse. In the first place, as we have seen, his administration of the war was, in some respects, open to grave censure. And, secondly, it cannot be considered that his policy in Ireland was successful. Of this something will be said later. All that need be mentioned here is that the Union of Great Britain with Ireland was finally achieved in 1800, and that when the king refused to sanction the emancipation of the Roman Catholics, which, it was understood, would be accomplished along with the Union, Pitt was by dictates of honour compelled in 1801 to resign.

To Pitt succeeded one of his followers, *Addington*. He it was who made the Treaty of Amiens in 1802, and conducted the early stages of the war when it was renewed in 1803. But he was quite unequal to the position.

"Pitt is to Addington

What London is to Paddington",

sang Canning, rather unkindly. And as the administration grew more Paddingtonian, it was felt that the tried pilot must be recalled. Pitt returned to power in 1804, and lived long enough to see the crowning victory of Trafalgar in October, 1805. But six weeks later Austerlitz made Napoleon supreme in Europe, and this victory, and the impeachment of his closest ally, Dundas Lord Melville, for malversation of funds,<sup>1</sup> broke down his already enfeebled health, and in January, 1806, he died.

<sup>1</sup> A vote of censure on Melville preceded the impeachment. In the actual vote, the numbers were equal; but the speaker, after a silence of many minutes, gave his casting vote against Melville. There ensued a scene of wild exultation amongst Pitt's opponents. Pitt crushed his cocked hat over his brow to conceal the tears trickling down his cheeks; and his younger supporters, forming a screen round him, led him away from the House.



Pitt, in his relations with his colleagues and the members of his party, seems to have been cold and reserved; a good deal of marble, they complained, entered into his composition, and it required much effort on the part of an interviewer to produce even a momentary thaw. Yet few ministers have managed the House of Commons with greater skill than the younger Pitt, and his pre-eminence in that assembly was unquestioned. As an orator, though he lacked the inspiration of his father, he was extraordinarily facile; he had, a contemporary said, almost an unnatural dexterity in the combination of words, and his great rival, Fox, confessed that although he himself was never at a loss for words, Pitt had always at command the best words possible.

It has been urged against Pitt that he was jealous of able men, and preferred to be the one man of genius in a cabinet of commonplace men; indeed, his second ministry was composed of such feeble elements that the wits said it consisted merely of "William and Pitt". Nor had his administration been free from mistakes. He was not a perfect minister; but then, in Lord Rosebery's opinion, such monsters do not exist. Pitt, however, if not perfect, must be reckoned amongst the greatest of prime ministers. Honest and incorruptible himself, he, like his father, did much to raise the standard of morality in public life. Above all, it was his indomitable courage and self-confidence that enabled Great Britain to weather the storm that was caused by the French Revolution and by Napoleon. To the French Pitt was always the arch-enemy who had to be subdued, the real centre of opposition to their designs. That the French Assembly should in 1793 have solemnly declared Pitt to be "the enemy of the human race" is the greatest compliment they could have paid him. "England has saved herself", he said in his last speech, "by her exertions, and will, as I trust, save Europe by her example." That she had done the one and was to accomplish the other was perhaps as much due to William Pitt, with all his shortcomings in the conduct of the war, as it was to Nelson or to Wellington.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Canning's comment on Pitt is worth quoting: "Whether Pitt *will* save us, I do not know, but surely he is the only man that *can*." A distinguished French historian has said that Pitt was the only great adversary encountered by the French Revolution and by Napoleon.



To the ministries that followed Pitt's second administration only brief allusion must be made. To Pitt's ministry succeeded,

Ministries of  
Grenville,  
1806-7.

in 1806, a ministry of "all the talents" on the Whig side, including Fox and Sheridan, the orator and playwright; whilst some Tories, such as Addington, were

included in it; and Lord Grenville, George Grenville's youngest son, became prime minister.<sup>1</sup> Fox tried negotiations with Napoleon, and was soon obliged to confess that his belief in Napoleon's sincerity was not justified; shortly afterwards he died (1806). The ministers succeeded, to their everlasting credit, in passing an Act abolishing the slave trade, and then resigned in consequence of George III's opposition to Catholic emancipation. To this

Duke of  
Portland,  
1807-9.

ministry followed two Tory ministries—the first under the *Duke of Portland*, in 1807; the second under *Spencer Perceval*, in 1809. Finally, in 1812, *Lord Liverpool*,

another Tory, became prime minister, and kept his position for the next fifteen years. But up till 1815 the real

Perceval, 1809-12,  
and Lord Liver-  
pool, 1812-5.

interest in our history lies in the struggle with

Napoleon, which has been narrated elsewhere, and which the ministers, despite great difficulties, carried on with dogged persistency. Whilst that war was going on, reforms at home were impossible.

Various other aspects of the period from 1714-1815 we have no space to survey. In art, Hogarth was the chief painter before

Art and  
literature,  
1714-1815.

1760, and the second half of the eighteenth century is famous for the names of Reynolds, Gainsborough, and Romney. In literature, Pope was the conspicuous figure

till his death in 1745. During the first half of George III's reign Samuel Johnson—made immortal by Boswell's *Life*—Gibbon, the author of the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Goldsmith, Burke, and the poet Burns are perhaps the best known. The early poems of Wordsworth and Scott were written during the French Revolution, and those of Byron during the Napoleonic wars, whilst the first novels of Jane Austen and Scott appeared, the one in 1811, and the other in 1814.

<sup>1</sup> The Grenville family played a distinguished part during the reign of George III. George Grenville (d. 1770) was prime minister, 1763-5; his sister was the wife of the great Earl of Chatham (d. 1778) and the mother of the younger Pitt (d. 1806); and one of his sons was the Lord Grenville who now became prime minister.



## XLII. History of Ireland, 1689-1815

We must now deal with the history of Ireland from the Revolution of 1688 until 1815. Its history is in sad contrast to that of Scotland during the same period. How James was beaten at the battle of the Boyne in 1690, and how after his departure his Roman Catholic supporters capitulated at Limerick in 1691, has already been narrated (p. 434). The Roman Catholics, under the terms of the *Capitulation of Limerick*, were promised two things. First, those soldiers who chose were to be allowed to go to France, and a very large number left Ireland. Secondly, the Roman Catholics in Ireland were to have the same privileges as they possessed in the reign of Charles II. But this second condition was not observed. On the contrary, between 1697 and 1727, the Irish Parliament, in which by an English Act of Parliament only Protestants were allowed to sit, passed against the Roman Catholics, who composed four-fifths of the population, a series of laws, known as the *Penal Laws*, of the most vindictive character. A Roman Catholic was not allowed to have a vote, and was excluded from every imaginable office or profession from that of a lord chancellor to that of a gamekeeper. He could not be educated at a university, and he could not keep a school or be the guardian of a child; he could not marry a Protestant, was not allowed to buy land, and was even forbidden to possess a horse worth more than £5.<sup>1</sup> No Protestant might sell, give, or bequeath land to a Roman Catholic: and when a Catholic died his land must be divided equally amongst his sons unless the eldest was a Protestant, in which case it all went to him. All Catholic bishops and deans were exiled, and all Catholic priests had to be registered. No Catholic chapel was allowed a bell or a steeple, and pilgrimages to holy wells were forbidden.

Quite apart from the exclusion of the Roman Catholics from any share in the government of their country, the political con-

<sup>1</sup> A Protestant was at liberty to offer £5 for any horse belonging to a Roman Catholic, who was bound to accept the offer.



dition of Ireland stood in great need of reform. All laws passed in the Irish Parliament had still, under Poynings' Act of 1495, to receive the assent of the privy council in England, whilst the Parliament in England, in the reign of George I, arrogated to itself the right of passing laws binding upon Ireland. It must be remembered also that the Irish Parliament had practically no control over the officials who governed Ireland, these being appointed and supervised by the Government in England, and it was an additional grievance that the highest of these officials were almost invariably Englishmen. The viceroys were Englishmen, often spending four-fifths of their time in England; the Protestant bishops were nearly all Englishmen, and some of them never came to Ireland at all;<sup>1</sup> and only one Irishman in the whole course of the eighteenth century was made lord chancellor.

The Irish Parliament itself needed drastic reformation; half the members of its House of Lords were Protestant bishops, whilst over two-thirds of the members of its House of Commons were nominated by individuals, no less than sixty seats belonging to three families; and, as has already been pointed out, no Roman Catholic could vote at an election or sit in either House of Parliament. Moreover, till past the middle of the eighteenth century, there was no fixed term for the duration of a parliament. Consequently a parliament lasted for an indefinite period, and one existed in the eighteenth century for over thirty years.

Even worse perhaps than the political was the economic condition of Ireland. That island is naturally a great pasturing country; its cattle and its wool were at one time the best in Europe. It might have become a great manufacturing country as well. But the selfishness of English farmers and manufacturers stifled its enterprise. The English Parliament had already, in Charles II's reign, forbidden the importation into England of cattle, sheep, and swine, alive or dead.

<sup>1</sup> One divine held the bishopric of Down for twenty years; he never went near it during the whole of that time, but lived at Hammersmith. Of two bishops appointed at the same time in the eighteenth century, it is said that one sent down to his diocese twenty-two cart-loads of books and one hogshead of wine; the other, however, was content with one load of books, but dispatched to his palace twenty-two hogsheads of wine.



It proceeded, in William III's reign, to prohibit altogether the exportation of Irish woollen manufactures, and to confine the export of Irish unmanufactured wool to England alone, where the wool had to pay heavy import duties.<sup>1</sup> Irish industries were thus ruined. But this does not exhaust the evils from which Ireland suffered. As a consequence of the Irish support to James II, a great deal of land had been confiscated, and it is reckoned that, after the Revolution, three-fourths of it belonged to owners of British descent. A large number of these owners lived in England in the eighteenth century, and let their land to people called "middlemen", who often rackrented and exploited the smaller tenants to whom they sublet. The wretched Irish peasant, paying rent to a middleman, tithes to the Protestant clergyman, and dues to his Roman Catholic priest, had in some cases, it was said, "hardly the skin of a potato to subsist upon".

Such were the conditions of Ireland in the earlier part of the eighteenth century, and they all combined to degrade and to debase the great mass of the population and to make the country a most unhappy one. The <sup>Irish emigration.</sup> more energetic and ambitious Irishmen, indeed, left their own country to pursue their fortunes elsewhere. Spain, for instance, possessed five Irish regiments, and within a hundred years a quarter of a million Irishmen, it is said, joined the Irish Brigade in France. It was that brigade which took the chief share in defeating the British at Almanza and at Fontenoy, and which caused, so tradition says, George II to say at Dettingen, "Curse on the laws which deprive me of such men". To Austria Ireland supplied some of her best generals, and to Russia two field-m Marshals,<sup>2</sup> whilst Coote's opponent at the hard-fought battle of Wandewash was of Irish extraction.

We must now see how the conditions in Ireland were

<sup>1</sup> It is true that after 1743 the British Government encouraged the flax and linen industry at Belfast; but that was inadequate compensation.

<sup>2</sup> One of these was the famous Peter Lacy. He began his martial career at the age of thirteen, fighting in defence of Limerick. Subsequently he entered the Russian service, and fought against Danes, Swedes, and Turks, and he finally became Governor of Livonia. He is credited with having converted the Russian troops from the worst troops in Europe to some of the best, and a division of the Russian army is still called after him.



gradually improved during the later portion of the eighteenth century. In the first place, it was found impossible in practice to carry out the laws imposing restrictions on the exercise of the Roman Catholic religion, and even before the middle of the century these laws were to all intents and purposes obsolete. The American War of Independence brought further relief to the Catholics; for the British Government, anxious to conciliate opinion in Ireland, encouraged the Irish Parliament to repeal the laws prohibiting Roman Catholics from buying land (1778), and before the war was over other concessions followed.

But the American War of Independence had more important effects even than this. It brought up the whole question of the relations of Great Britain to her dependencies—and Ireland might almost be called a dependency, and in some ways was much worse off than the American colonies. Above

**Relaxation of Penal Laws, 1778-82.**

**Abolition of Commercial Code (1780), and creation of independent Parliament (1782).**

all, it gave Ireland an opportunity of pressing her claims in a way that could not be resisted. During the later stages of the war, Great Britain, hard pressed by her foes in every part of the world, had to withdraw the bulk of the troops from Ireland. The country was in imminent danger of an invasion from France; and was indeed, at one period, in "daily, almost hourly expectation of it". Quite spontaneously, Irishmen, of all creeds and classes, organized themselves into volunteers for the protection of their country from a French invasion. Nearly all the landed gentry became volunteers, the Duke of Leinster, for instance, commanding the Dublin contingent. Volunteer rank was given precedence in society, and great sacrifices were made to supply a sufficiency of funds. The movement was entirely independent of the Government, who indeed regarded it, and with reason, with considerable apprehension. For the volunteers, when they realized their power, began, like Cromwell's Ironsides, to interfere in politics, and demanded an independent Parliament and the abolition of the restrictions upon Irish industries;<sup>1</sup> "England", as an Irish orator said, "had sown her laws in dragons'

<sup>1</sup> The uniforms of the volunteers—scarlet, green, blue, and orange—were all manufactured in Ireland so as to encourage home industries.



teeth, and they had sprung up armed men". Moreover, in Henry Grattan Ireland had found a parliamentary leader of exceptional ability and force of character, who directed the movement in the Irish Parliament with great distinction. The British Parliament was powerless to resist. In 1780 the restrictions on Irish trade and industries were abolished. Two years later, in 1782, Ireland obtained her legislative independence, Poynings' Act being repealed and the British Parliament giving up the right to pass laws binding upon Ireland.

Between 1778 and 1782, therefore, some of the chief grievances of Ireland had been redressed. The officials in Dublin Castle now thought that reform had gone quite far enough, and were strongly hostile to any more concessions. Henry Grattan.

A body of moderate reformers, on the other hand, thought still further changes were necessary. Their leader was *Henry Grattan*, perhaps the greatest of Irish orators. Born in 1746, and educated at Trinity College, Dublin, he had been nominated a member of the Irish House of Commons in 1775.<sup>1</sup> He had quickly become its foremost member, and was the great champion of the independence of the Irish Parliament, that parliament showing its gratitude by voting him a grant of £50,000. Grattan's policy after 1782, may be briefly summarized. He was a strong supporter of complete Catholic emancipation: "the Irish Protestant", he said, "can never be free whilst the Catholic is a slave". He ardently supported the reform of the worst abuses in the Irish parliamentary system. But he was no believer in democratic government or in universal suffrage. "I want", he said, "to combat the wild spirit of democratic liberty by the regulated spirit of organized liberty." Above all, he saw the necessity of preserving the connection between Great Britain and Ireland, and was of opinion that Ireland should give Great Britain "decided and unequivocal support in time of war". To Grattan's powers of speech all bear witness; indeed, it has been said of Grattan that no British orator, except Chatham, had an equal

<sup>1</sup> When a young man Grattan was fond of going out late on moonlight nights and soliloquizing aloud. On one occasion at midnight he was apostrophizing a gibbet in Windsor forest, when suddenly he felt a tap on the shoulder, and a man, presumably of a somewhat unprepossessing appearance, said to him, "How the devil did you get down?" "Sir," replied Grattan quite unalarmed, "I suppose you have some interest in that question."



power of inspiring a nation, and that no British orator, except Burke, had an equal power of sowing his speeches with profound maxims of political wisdom.<sup>1</sup>

The *French Revolution*, like the American War of Independence, had a profound influence upon Ireland. It had proclaimed the equality of men; it had abolished religious disqualifications; it had destroyed the old tithe system; and had organized government on a democratic basis. The Roman Catholic who wanted emancipation and the Presbyterian who wanted parliamentary reform alike applauded the Revolution as the dawn of a golden age for Ireland as well; and in 1791 the anniversary of the fall of the Bastille was celebrated with rapturous rejoicings. The French Revolution also led to the formation of an extreme party in Ireland with which Grattan found himself in little sympathy. Its leader was *Wolfe Tone*. He succeeded in persuading the Presbyterians in Ulster and the Roman Catholics elsewhere to support each other's demands and to combine in an organization called the "*United Irishmen*"<sup>2</sup> (1792). The organization became very popular and had an enormous membership. Pitt felt that some concession must be made, and overruled the objections of the officials in Ireland; and, owing to his influence, a bill was passed through the Irish Parliament in 1793 which, among other things, allowed the Roman Catholics to have votes, though they were still excluded from sitting in Parliament. This was one of those half-measures which was bound to lead to further agitation and difficulty.

In 1795 there occurred an incident which was destined to have great effect upon Irish history. A section of the Whigs in Great Britain had, in consequence of the war with France, joined Pitt's party (p. 572). In the distribution of offices a Whig called *Lord Fitzwilliam* was made Viceroy of Ireland. He himself was in agreement with

<sup>1</sup> He had a bad delivery, however. It was said that he nearly swept the ground with his gestures, and Lord Byron, the poet, spoke of his "harlequin manner".

<sup>2</sup> "To subvert the tyranny of our execrable government," wrote Wolfe Tone, "to break the connection with England, the never-failing source of all our political evils, and to assert the independence of my country—these were my objects. To unite the whole people of Ireland, to abolish the memory of its past dissensions, and to substitute the common name of Irishmen in place of the denominations of protestants, catholics, and dissenters—these were my means."



Grattan, and was in favour of granting the Roman Catholics full emancipation and of allowing them to sit in Parliament. Very soon after his arrival he announced his intention of bringing this proposal before the Irish Parliament. The instructions that he received from Pitt before he left England were certainly not intended to allow him to do this. They may, however, have been open to misinterpretation, and there is no doubt that Pitt's Government was extremely dilatory in answering Fitzwilliam's dispatches from Ireland, dispatches which advocated the policy of immediate emancipation as the only possible solution of Irish difficulties. Fitzwilliam's policy aroused intense opposition from some of the ultra-Protestants and the officials in Ireland; finally it was disavowed by Pitt's ministry and its author recalled.

Fitzwilliam's proposal and consequent recall mark, it has been said, a fatal turning-point in Irish history. The "United Irishmen" developed into a secret and treasonable society, composed almost entirely of Roman Catholics, and working for the total separation of Great Britain and Ireland. Their intrigues with the French resulted in Hoche's expedition to Bantry Bay in 1796, which—fortunately for Great Britain—failed (p. 526). Moreover, the atrocities of the United Irishmen on those who opposed them embittered the feeling of the more extreme Protestants, and led to the formation of the "*Orangemen*", who retaliated by showing great cruelty to the Roman Catholics. Finally, the condition of Ireland became so alarming that in 1797 orders were given for the disarmament of Ulster; and soldiers, of whom the Welsh and Germans acquired the worst reputation for their inhuman brutality, marched over the country, breaking into houses, and intimidating and sometimes torturing persons to make them give up their hidden arms.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It was not only in Ulster that the search for arms took place. The High Sheriff of Tipperary, Thomas FitzGerald, achieved an unenviable notoriety through the brutality of his methods, especially in the case of a harmless teacher of French called Wright. FitzGerald suspected him of being secretary to the United Irishmen in Tipperary, and ordered him to be flogged and then shot. When fifty lashes had been administered, an officer present asked the reason for the flogging. The High Sheriff, in reply, handed him a note written in French which had been found in Wright's possession, and said that though he could not understand the language, the officer would find in it "what will justify him in flogging the scoundrel to death". The officer, who could read French, found the note perfectly innocuous, and told FitzGerald—nevertheless FitzGerald did not stop the flogging, but ordered Wright to have one hundred more lashes, and then threw him into prison.



In 1798 came the *Irish Rebellion*. The leaders of the Rebellion had as their ostensible objects Catholic emancipation and parliamentary reform. But the peasants who joined in the Rebellion did so, for the most part, for other reasons. They felt the grievance of the payment of tithe very acutely. They had been led to believe, partly through old prophecies, that the time had come for Ireland to retrieve her nationality and to separate from Great Britain. And, above all, they thought, as in 1641, that the Protestants were trying to exterminate them and their religion, and they rose to protect their own lives.<sup>1</sup> The Rebellion, however, did not prove a formidable affair. Ulster had been effectually disarmed, and was still subject to the severe exercise of martial law. The leaders of the Irish Catholics, including a heroic figure in Lord Edward FitzGerald, had been seized shortly before the Rebellion broke out.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, though some French soldiers landed, they arrived too late to be of any service and had to retire. Consequently the Rebellion only affected two counties, Wicklow and Wexford, and it lasted little more than a month, the rebels being defeated at *New Ross* and *Vinegar Hill*.

After the Rebellion was over, Pitt felt that the only way to preserve the connection of Ireland with Great Britain, and to secure any harmony between Roman Catholics and Protestants in Ireland itself, was by means of a Union between Great Britain and Ireland, similar to that between England and Scotland. Irish opinion was, however, against such a union. But lavish promises of peerages and honours—forty-one persons were either created peers or raised a step in the peerage—and very generous money compensation to those in-

<sup>1</sup> It was popularly believed that the secret oath taken by an Orangeman was: "I will be true to the king and government, and I will exterminate, as far as I am able, the Catholics of Ireland".

<sup>2</sup> Lord Edward FitzGerald was one of the seventeen children of the first Duke of Leinster. He served in the American War of Independence and was severely wounded, his life only being saved by a negro, who afterwards became his devoted servant. Subsequently FitzGerald was in Paris during part of the Revolution, attended the debates of the Convention Assembly, and was imbued with revolutionary ideas. He joined the United Irishmen on his return, and was one of the organizers of the Rebellion. A price was put on his head by the Government, and through treachery he was seized in a feather-dealer's house in Dublin. He killed one of his captors, but was himself severely wounded, and died shortly afterwards in prison.



dividuals who held "pocket boroughs",<sup>1</sup> won over part of the opposition. Moreover, though no explicit promise was made, the Roman Catholics were given to understand by the Government that Catholic emancipation would form a sequel to the passing of the Union. With the opposition thus, to some extent, conciliated, the *Act of Union*, despite Grattan's speeches against it, was finally passed through the Irish Parliament in 1800. By its terms four Irish bishops and twenty-eight peers, who were to be elected for life by the whole body of Irish peers, were to sit in the House of Lords, whilst Ireland was to contribute a hundred members to the House of Commons. Ireland was to keep her separate judicial system and her separate executive—dependent, of course, upon the British ministry. There was to be absolute free trade between Ireland and Great Britain, and Ireland was to contribute two-seventeenths to the revenue of the United Kingdom.

Thus ended the Irish Independent Parliament after an existence of eighteen years. It had possessed some able speakers and statesmen; it had passed some useful laws; and, on the whole, considering the difficulties which it had to meet, it was not unsuccessful. The understanding about Catholic emancipation came, unfortunately, to nothing. George III became firmly convinced that the grant of such emancipation would be contrary to his coronation oath, and would not agree to it, and Pitt consequently resigned office in 1801.<sup>2</sup> Our period consequently ends with Catholic emancipation still unsecured, with the Irish land question still unsolved, and the Irish consequently remaining a dissatisfied nation.

<sup>1</sup> Over £1,250,000 was expended in this fashion, and two peers received £52,000 and £45,000 respectively for their boroughs.

<sup>2</sup> It is reported that the king read the Coronation Oath to his family and said, "If I violate it I am no longer legal sovereign of this country, but it falls to the House of Savoy".



## XLIII. The Industrial Revolution and Social Progress from about 1750 to 1900

If the seventeenth century is chiefly important in English history for the struggle of King and Parliament, and if the eighteenth century derives its chief interest from the progress of science, the great wars between Great Britain and France, the years from 1800 onwards are remarkable, above all else, for the development of science. What has been called the modern alliance between pure science and industry has wrought a revolution in our methods of life. "If in the last hundred years," says a distinguished statesman, "the whole material setting of civilized life has altered, we owe it neither to politicians nor to political institutions. We owe it to the combined efforts of those who have advanced science and those who have applied it." The beginning of these great scientific changes came, however, in the second half of the eighteenth century, and, in order to preserve the same divisions as in political history, we may make 1815 the dividing line between two periods.

### 1. The Industrial Revolution (before 1815)

The first of our industries perhaps to be affected by the scientific spirit was our oldest—that of Agriculture. Up till the eighteenth century *arable* land had, in most districts, been treated as in the Middle Ages; it was sown with corn for two years and then left fallow for a year in order to recuperate its fertility. The discovery was, however, made that by the cultivation of roots, the recuperative advantages of a bare fallow might be secured without the loss of a year's crop. Moreover, the roots both gave the opportunity for clearing the soil and provided food for the cattle and sheep during the winter.<sup>1</sup> Consequently there was more manure, and the fertility of the land

<sup>1</sup> Formerly the bulk of the stock, except that required for breeding purposes, was killed about Martinmas.



## Chronological Summary of History after 1815

The years since 1815 may be divided into four periods: first, from 1815-32 to the first Reform Bill; second, from 1832-54; third, from 1854-78, a period of important wars; fourth, from 1878 till the present day.

During the *First* period, 1815-32, the chief features in Foreign affairs were the anti-Liberal policy of Metternich, the Greek War of Independence, and the Revolutions of 1830, which led to the creation of the kingdom of Belgium (pp. 650-5). In Home affairs, great distress in the years after 1815 led to many riots. Then followed a period of Reforms; and finally, in 1829, owing to the agitation in Ireland (pp. 643-4), came the Catholic Emancipation Act, and then, on the return of the Whigs to power, the Reform Bill of 1832 (Ch. XLIV). The period is important for the rule of Lord Hastings (p. 518) in India, and for the occupation of Singapore (p. 682); for the beginning of Railways (p. 589); and in literature for the poetry of Keats, Shelley, and Byron. George IV came to the throne in 1820, and was succeeded by William IV in 1830.

During the *Second* period, from 1832-54, the chief interest in Foreign affairs lay in the policy of Lord Palmerston; and the chief events in Europe were the movements connected with the Revolutions of 1848 (pp. 654-8). With regard to Home affairs, Queen Victoria began her long reign in 1837, under the tutelage of Lord Melbourne; and in 1846, during Peel's ministry, the Corn Laws, owing to the potato famine in Ireland (p. 645), were repealed (pp. 613-25). The other chief points of interest were the Poor Law Act of 1834 (p. 600), and the Ten Hours Act of 1847 (p. 596); in religion, the Oxford movement in England, and the Disruption of the Church in Scotland (pp. 628-9); and in literature, many of the works of Tennyson and Browning, Carlyle and Macaulay, Thackeray and Dickens. In Imperial history the period is important; it saw the birth of the Self-governing Dominion in Canada (pp. 698-699); the development of Australia and the annexation of New Zealand (pp. 701-2); the acquisition of Hong-Kong (p. 683); the abolition of Slavery (1833), which led to difficulties in Jamaica and South Africa (pp. 704-5); the first Afghan War, and the rule of Lord Dalhousie (1848-56) in India (pp. 684-89).

The *Third* period, 1854-78, was a period when momentous wars were fought. The Crimean War began in 1854 (pp. 658-64); the Indian Mutiny followed in 1857 (pp. 689-93); the Italian Liberation and the American Civil Wars came in 1859 and 1861 (pp. 664-6). In 1862 Bismarck rose to be the ruling minister in Prussia, and brought about successively wars with Denmark, Austria (1866), and France (1870), the last of which led to a republic in France and the foundation of the German Empire (pp. 666-9). A few years later the Eastern Question became acute, but the Treaty of Berlin (1878) settled matters for the time (pp. 670-1). In Home politics, Lord Palmerston was the dominant personality till 1865, and then came the rivalry of Disraeli and Gladstone. The



Reform Bill of 1867 was passed; and in 1870 education was made compulsory (pp. 625-37 and pp. 597-8). Irish affairs absorbed much attention after 1869, and the Irish Church was disestablished and the Land Acts were passed (pp. 646-8). The Dominion of Canada was founded in 1867 (p. 699), and ten years later the Queen became Empress of India. The publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species* in 1859 marked an epoch in Science.

In the *Fourth* period, that since 1878, the main features have been the interest shown by the nations of Europe in World Politics, the World War and its aftermath, the changing conception of the British Empire, and the period of world-wide economic depression which started in 1929. There came on the part of the European nations, first, about 1884, the "grab" for Africa, and later, that for the Far East (pp. 679-83). At times there was no little ill-feeling between Great Britain and other European powers, and this was especially marked during the South African War in 1899 (pp. 709-13). With the accession of Edward VII in 1901 Great Britain began to emerge from her isolation; she made a treaty with Japan, and subsequently the Triple Entente with France and Russia, to balance the Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria, and Italy. The situation, however, owing to German ambitions, was precarious, and in 1914 Germany thought she saw her chance and seized it. Thus the World War began. The Central Powers, Germany and Austria, were at first successful, but eventually they were overwhelmed by the allied powers of Great Britain, France and Belgium, joined later by Italy and the United States (p. 726). The British Empire had meanwhile become consolidated; the Commonwealth of Australia came in 1900 (p. 702), the Union of South Africa in 1909 (p. 713), a closer connection was established between Great Britain and the other parts of the Empire through the Imperial Conferences of Prime Ministers (p. 714). Changing ideas regarding the constitution of the Empire and the status of the Dominions led to the recognition of the Empire as the "British Commonwealth of Nations", and of the Dominions as completely autonomous (*Statute of Westminster*, 1931) (pp. 765-8). In Home affairs, after 1878, the chief features were the further experiments in democracy made by the third Reform Bill of 1884, by the extension of Local Government in 1888, and the Parliament Act of 1911; the growth of State interference; the disputes between capital and labour; the break-up of the Liberal party in 1886 owing to the first Home Rule Bill, and of the Unionist party in 1906, owing to the policy of Tariff Reform, which led the Liberals back to power, and of the Liberal party once again owing to the war; the rise of the Labour party; the Land Purchase Act in Ireland, and the division of Ireland into the Irish Free State and Northern Ireland; the extension of the franchise in 1918 and 1928; the financial crisis of 1931; and the formation of the National Government in 1931 (pp. 637-43, 648-9, 757-68).



was correspondingly increased. Tradition says that "*Turnip*" *Townshend*, George I's minister, was the first to realize the importance of this discovery, and to develop on his Norfolk estates a four-year rotation of crops (e.g. wheat, some form of roots, barley, a mixture of clover and some form of grasses), never taking two successive corn crops off the same land; and this principle of rotation—sometimes three-year or five-year instead of four-year—was generally adopted in the latter part of the eighteenth century in England.<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, the scientific breeding of live stock, especially by *Bakewell*,<sup>2</sup> the developer of the famous Leicestershire breed of sheep, produced such changes that by 1800 the average weight of sheep was nearly three times and of cattle more than twice what it was at the beginning of the eighteenth century. New forms of manure for the land, new artificial foods for stock, were also discovered. The institution at the end of the century of the *Smithfield Club* for the encouragement of stock breeding, and of a new government department, the Board of Agriculture, are significant of the great interest taken in agriculture, an interest shared by George III himself, who started the model farm at Windsor, and wrote articles in agricultural newspapers.

These were not the only great changes that took place in agricultural conditions in this period. Waste lands were reclaimed and made productive by enterprising land-owners. Large farms were substituted for small farms in many districts. Above all, an enormous amount of common land and open fields—no less than seven million acres in George III's reign alone—was enclosed by individuals, chiefly of course the neighbouring landowners, through Acts of Parliament. At the same time more capital was expended on the land, more improvements were introduced, and the enclosed land was made far more productive—it has been estimated that its produce

<sup>1</sup> There is a story that an archdeacon took a rector to task for growing turnips in a churchyard. "This must not occur again," he said. "Oh no, sir, next year it will be barley!" was the reply of the unrepentant rector.

<sup>2</sup> He was born in 1725 and died in 1794. People used to come from all over the world to see his bull "Twopenny" and his ram "Two-pounder"; and in his kitchen he would entertain "Russian princes, French and German royal dukes, British peers, and sight-seers of every description".



multiplied at least fivefold. But these changes led to the decay, and even to the disappearance, in many parts of England of the yeoman class and of the small farmers. They found in many districts increased difficulty in obtaining a livelihood owing to the enclosure of the common lands on which they used to feed their stock, and, moreover, they were often tempted by good offers to sell their land.<sup>1</sup> Many of them sank into the position of labourers, and their condition during the earlier part of the nineteenth century was deplorable.

As regards manufactures, it is in the *Cotton Industry* that the most wonderful developments occur in this period, owing to inventions in both the spinning and the weaving of cotton. The first invention occurred in weaving; for in 1738 John Kay invented a shuttle which could be thrown mechanically from one side of the loom to the other. When this "flying-shuttle" came into use, the spinners had not enough yarn to supply to the weavers; but then came other inventions which revolutionized the spinning industry. Hitherto, one person could only look after one spindle; but in 1764 Hargreaves contrived a wheel which turned sixteen spindles—called, in honour of his wife's name, a "Spinning Jenny". Five years later, in 1769, Arkwright developed a process of spinning by rollers through water power. Finally Crompton by his "Mule" combined in his machine the principle of both these inventions. Consequently, one person could by the end of the century supervise hundreds of spindles. It was now time for a fresh development in weaving; and in 1785 Cartwright, a poet and a clergyman, despite the statement of manufacturers that it was impossible, set to work to make an improved weaving machine, and after three years found his efforts crowned with success in the *power-loom* which he invented.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Modern researches show that up till 1785 the number of small owners or yeomen steadily declined; but from 1785-1802 there actually seems to have been an increase in their number, except in those districts where the rapid growth of manufactories led people to migrate to the towns.

<sup>2</sup> Some conception of the magnitude of the changes effected by these and other inventions may be obtained by statistics. In 1750 only some forty thousand men were engaged in cotton industries; in 1831 over eight hundred thousand were occupied. The quantity of raw cotton imported in certain years was as follows: 1750, three million pounds; 1815, one hundred million pounds; 1913, over two thousand million pounds; 1930, twelve hundred million pounds.



Hardly less remarkable than the development of the cotton industry was that of *Iron*. Hitherto iron had been smelted by charcoal, and as the forests decreased the price of fuel rose. But in the eighteenth century, chiefly through an improved blast invented in the year of George III's accession (1760), coke and coal began to be used in place of charcoal; and this placed the unlimited resources of the British coalfields at the disposal of the ironmasters. Other inventions followed, such as new methods of rolling and puddling iron—due to *Henry Cort*—and before the end of the century great ironworks had arisen in various districts. The "age of iron" had come; and in 1777 the first iron bridge was made, and in 1790 the first iron vessel launched. °

Other manufactures besides that of cotton and iron were also developed, such as that of earthenware, owing largely to Josiah Wedgwood. The utilization of a new power—that of *steam*—is, however, far the most important feature in the period before 1815. The power of steam had been recognized some time before, but it was left to *Watt*<sup>1</sup>—a mathematical-instrument maker of Greenock—to produce in 1769 the first efficient steam engine. At first the steam engine had only a vertical motion, and was used chiefly for drawing up water; later, however, was discovered the possibility of a rotatory and parallel motion, and steam power could then be utilized in manufactories. The last four years of our period saw still further developments. One of the first steamers, the *Comet*, sailed down the Clyde in the year of Napoleon's Russian campaign (1812). The first locomotive engine was invented by *Stephenson* two years later. And the year of Waterloo (1815) saw the invention by Humphry Davy of the safety lamp for the use of the miners without whose labour the employment of steam power would have been impossible.

Though the railway and the steamer really belong to the era after 1815, yet the period anterior to that date saw great improvements in the methods of communication. The canal, invented, like so many other things, originally by the Chinese, was intro-

<sup>1</sup> According to Sir Walter Scott, who saw him in old age, Watt was not only one of the most generally well-informed, but one of the best and kindest of human beings, who, in his eighty-fifth year, had "his attention alive to everyone's question, his information at everyone's command".



duced into England in 1759. A canal made by *Brindley*<sup>1</sup> for the Duke of Bridgewater, from the Worsley collieries to Manchester, at once halved the price of coal in that city, and led to such a development in the building of canals, that by the end of the eighteenth century London, Bristol, Liverpool, and Hull were connected by water, as well as the Forth and the Clyde. Early in the next century no place south of Durham, so it was said, was more than fifteen miles distant from water conveyance.

Means of  
communication:  
Canals.

In the earlier part of the eighteenth century the roads had been indescribably bad. One contemporary measured ruts a foot deep in one of the most important roads in the north, and found some roads in Sussex which a wet winter would make impassable even during the following summer, whilst in Scotland wheeled traffic on the roads was impossible. In the second half of the century, however, the roads in Great Britain were vastly improved, and just before the end of the period—in 1811—*John Macadam* reported to Parliament the new method of making roads which has made his name so familiar. The stage coach had been introduced as early as 1640; but in 1784 a man named *Palmer* introduced new mail coaches for passengers and mails which went with far greater regularity and swiftness than their predecessors.

New methods in agriculture, new inventions in manufactures, improved means of communication, all had their share in developing the prosperity of Great Britain, and in justifying the name usually applied to this period in our economic history, that of the "Industrial Revolution". The influence of the great wars, however, in developing our commerce must not be forgotten. "War fosters commerce, and commerce fosters war," is the dictum of a distinguished historian; and though this may not apply to the modern world, the saying was true at this time of our own country, which was never invaded. In every war our imports and exports increased; and, above all, there was an immense extension of our merchant shipping, which was to become, in the nineteenth century, our most important

<sup>1</sup> In the course of his life Brindley built as many miles of canals as there are days in the year, i.e. 365. He did most of his work in his head, as he wrote with difficulty, and never spelt with any approach to correctness. When he had a very puzzling piece of work, he went to bed and stayed there till his difficulties were solved.



industry. The development of commerce was especially striking during the wars between 1793 and 1815. British shippers had the monopoly of the carrying trade; because under no other European flag were goods even moderately safe. British manufacturers were encouraged by the needs of war and by the practical suspension of manufactures in many parts of the Continent. British farmers, secure from foreign competition, obtained high prices for their corn. Great Britain indeed obtained during these years a lead which she was not to lose for some time.

## 2. Scientific Progress, 1815-c. 1900

We turn to the second of our two periods—from 1815 to the beginning of the twentieth century. There is, to begin with, the revolution in the ways and methods of communication through the development of steam and the Means of communication. introduction of electrical power—changes which dwarf those effected by the canals and by better roads in the previous century. First and foremost came the introduction of railways. Railways. The locomotive engine had already been invented in 1814 by *Stephenson*, but it could only convey coals—for which purpose it was used—at three miles an hour. The first railway of any length had been projected in 1818, but the proposal had been thrown out in Parliament.<sup>1</sup> However, in 1821 the Stockton and Darlington Railway was authorized, and four years later opened for traffic, whilst in 1827 came the first use of the locomotive on rails in Scotland. But not much attention was attracted before the building of the *Liverpool and Manchester Railway*. Public interest in this was first stirred by the difficulties met with in the construction of the line; then by a race between four different kinds of locomotives, in which Stephenson's "Rocket", going at the finish at thirty-five miles an hour, was successful; and finally by the opening of the line in 1829 in the presence of the Duke of Wellington, the Prime Minister.<sup>2</sup> Fifteen years later,

<sup>1</sup> Partly because it threatened to pass near a duke's fox coverts.

<sup>2</sup> The opening was marred by a sad accident. An ex-cabinet minister, Huskisson, who had quarrelled with Wellington, was present. He advanced to speak to the Duke and effect a reconciliation, when an engine approached along the rails on which he was standing. Huskisson was rather clumsy, failed to get into a carriage on the other line, and was caught by the engine.



in 1844, came the great railway mania in Great Britain, when numerous railway companies were started and an immense extension of line laid down. By 1850 nearly all the big lines had been established.<sup>1</sup>

One or two other points may be noticed. Queen Victoria made her first journey by railway in 1842. The Cheap Trains Act, which came into force in 1846, laid down that one train must run daily each way along every line, carrying passengers at one penny per mile. The railways, forced in this way to do more for the third-class passengers, soon found that they paid best of all, and in 1872 the Midland Railway allowed third-class passengers on all trains—an example which was soon followed by nearly all the big lines.<sup>2</sup>

Hardly less important than the development of railways was the development of steamships. The steamer had preceded the locomotive, but some little time elapsed before steamships. steamers came into great use. The first passage across the Atlantic by steam power alone was accomplished in 1838 by the *Great Western* in fourteen days at an average pace of just over eight knots; and within two years of this date the Royal Mail Steam Packet, the Peninsular and Oriental, and the Cunard Companies had been started. Every year has seen the development of steam power in navigation. The total tonnage of steam vessels of the United Kingdom in 1841 was only one-thirtieth that of the sailing fleet, and before the Suez Canal was opened in 1872 the quickest passages from China in connection with the tea trade were still done by sailing ships. But by 1883 the steam tonnage equalled the sailing tonnage, whilst at the end of Queen Victoria's reign it was four times as great.

The increased facilities of communication may be realized by a few illustrations. A journey from London to Edinburgh in the <sup>Some</sup> earlier part of the eighteenth century might take any-  
<sup>illustrations.</sup> thing from ten days to three weeks; it can now be accomplished by train in eight hours. It took the Duke of Wellington, in 1804, six months to return home from India; now a

<sup>1</sup> With the exception of the Chatham and Dover (1860), the Midland (1863), and the Highland Railway (1865).

<sup>2</sup> In 1845, the year before the Cheap Trains Act, the railway mileage was 2441; in 1932 it was over 20,000.



traveller from London can reach Bombay by train and steamer in fifteen days, and an important event that happened at Calcutta at sunset might be known in London, owing to the difference of longitude, by noon on the same day. In the time of the American War of Independence it took some six weeks to reach America; the latest record by steamer is well under five days. There is no need to multiply these illustrations; it is sufficient to say that by the beginning of the twentieth century it was as easy to get to the most distant parts of the world as it was a hundred years ago to get to the most distant parts of Europe. Of the developments of the twentieth century in motors, and flying, and wireless we shall have more to say later (Chap. LVI).

Vast changes, again, in the Post Office have improved the means of communication. The conveyance of letters, organized first in the reign of Charles I, had become a Government monopoly, and their delivery had been made quicker and more frequent by the employment, towards the close of the eighteenth century, of Palmer's mail coaches. But expense and delay were still characteristic of the Post Office system at the time of Queen Victoria's accession. The charge for letters, for instance, from London to Windsor was 5*d.*; from London to Cambridge, 8*d.*; and from London to Durham, 1*s.* Letters could not be posted after seven o'clock at night, and their delivery was exceedingly slow.<sup>1</sup> The reforms made were due, above all, to Rowland Hill. He proved that the expense of a letter did not vary appreciably with the distance it was carried, and owing to his efforts the penny postage was at last introduced in 1840. The postmaster-general of the day opposed the change on the ground that, if it was made, the Post Office might have to convey not forty-two millions (as they then did), but eight hundred and forty millions of letters annually—a number which would burst the walls of the Post Office. That particular number was, however, exceeded threefold some forty years later, and some faint idea of the volume of business may be gathered from the fact that the total weight of the stamps issued in 1931 was only just under

The Post  
Office.

<sup>1</sup> A letter written after 7 p.m. on a Friday night at Uxbridge, and posted at the earliest available moment, would not have reached Gravesend, distant only forty miles, before Tuesday morning.



400 tons.<sup>1</sup> The delivery of letters has been, of course, enormously simplified and accelerated by the development of railways, steamers, and aircraft.

The *telegraph* and the *telephone* also assisted to revolutionize our means of communication. The first telegraph line was laid in 1844 from Paddington to Slough, and the capture of a murderer at the latter place by means of a telegram first drew popular attention to its possibilities.

The telegraph line once laid in England, the next step was to lay cables to foreign countries; that to Calais was laid in 1851, and after many failures a cable, weighing 4300 tons, was at length, in 1865, laid across the Atlantic. Now all parts of the world are connected

by cables, and there are no fewer than sixteen *Telephones* laid from Europe to North America. *Telephones* followed in 1876, and have gradually been developed since that time.

Lastly, we must say something of not the least important element in our improved means of communication—the modern newspaper. The first regular newspaper appeared as early as the latter part of James I's reign. But it was not till the reign of Anne that the first daily London newspaper appeared, or that really able people like Defoe and Swift employed their pens as journalists. Steadily during the eighteenth century the influence and circulation of newspapers increased.<sup>2</sup> But in 1815 the newspapers were subject to heavy taxes. The stamp duty on each copy of a newspaper was 4d., the paper on which the newspapers were printed was taxed, and 10 per cent of the profits went in income tax, whilst in addition there was a special tax on advertisements. Moreover, the application of steam for printing had only just begun, and the methods of production were slow and costly. Consequently, the price of a newspaper was 7d., and there were only six daily newspapers published in London.

These various duties have been gradually taken off. The use of steam and electricity has enabled webs of paper miles long to

<sup>1</sup> Or, put in another way, whilst every person received on the average only four letters a year at Queen Victoria's accession, each person on the average now receives 140.

<sup>2</sup> Of papers which survive at the present time, the *Morning Post* came into existence three years before the beginning (1772), and the *Times* two years after the close, of the American War of Independence (1785).



be converted into thousands of copies of newspapers in an hour. Newspapers to-day have their own special wires to Paris and Berlin, and their special correspondents all over the world, whilst the editors—such as Delane of the *Times* in the middle of the nineteenth century—have exerted enormous influence on public opinion, and often on the conduct of public affairs.

We have already alluded to the changes effected in agriculture and the cotton industry in the eighteenth century, and we have no space to enter in detail into the revolutions effected in every industry during the nineteenth century by an infinite variety of inventions and the development of machinery worked by steam and electricity. Nor can we do more than allude to other discoveries and inventions which have expanded our interests, like photography, or increased our knowledge, like the spectroscope, or saved us time in writing and reading letters, like the typewriter. Other inventions have increased the conveniences of life, such, for instance, as the use of gas,<sup>1</sup> and later of electricity; or the invention of a new burner for lamps, or of phosphorus matches, the one a few years before and the other a few years after Queen Victoria's accession. Nor can we do more than allude to the wonderful developments of medical science. Of these the most striking, perhaps, are the introduction of *anæsthetics* about 1848, which made the most severe operations painless, and the use, in 1865, of *antiseptics*,<sup>2</sup> which, it is calculated, has reduced the deaths from serious amputations from 45 per cent to some 12 per cent, besides rendering possible numberless operations never before attempted. Nor can we dwell here on the revolutions in scientific thought due, for instance, to the doctrine of the conservation of energy, and above all to the theory of natural selection propounded by Darwin in 1859 in the *Origin of Species*—a theory which has profoundly affected man's speculations in every domain of thought.

Discoveries  
of the  
nineteenth  
century.

<sup>1</sup> It was first made popular by the successful lighting of old Westminster Bridge in the year of Vittoria (1813).

<sup>2</sup> Lord Lister, an Englishman who used to work in the Glasgow Infirmary, was the first to make use of a chemical agent for wounds in order to kill the germs or microbes, selecting at first carbolic acid.



### 3. Social Progress in the Nineteenth Century

Having briefly reviewed the revolution effected by science in trade and industry, we must mention some of its momentous results. First, and most striking, is the growth in population which is, to some extent at all events, the result of the industrial revolution. Previously the growth had been slow. The population of England and Wales, which was estimated to have been in 1570 about four and a quarter millions, took more than two centuries to double itself. But with the close of the eighteenth century came a rapid increase. The population of the *United Kingdom* rose from fourteen millions in 1789 to forty-six millions in 1931, the development being greatest in England and Wales, where the population during this period almost quadrupled.

Moreover, not only did the population increase, but the centres of population in England shifted in the nineteenth century to the North. Bristol and Norwich had been in old days next in importance to London; but the growth of cities such as Liverpool and Manchester was startling in its rapidity, and the north, owing partly to the contiguity of coal mines and iron, and partly to the suitability of the Lancashire climate for cotton manufactures, became the great industrial and progressive part of the nation. Then, again, the population shifted from the country to the town. The chief reason of the influx into the towns has been that the *factory system*, under which numbers of people are employed in large manufactories, displaced the old *domestic system*, under which men worked in their own cottages or in the house of a small master. It is true that even as late as the "forties" and "fifties" of the nineteenth century many industries were in the hands of domestic workers or very small masters, but the development of machinery and of steam and electric power made their eventual disappearance inevitable.

At the present time 80 per cent of the inhabitants of England and Wales live in urban conditions. As to the conditions of the towns, it may be said that, though sometimes unsatisfactory now, they used to be much worse. The corporations which



used to govern them were inefficient and corrupt. Housing was scandalously insufficient and often squalid.<sup>1</sup> Gradually the conditions have improved. The Municipal Corporations Act of 1835 helped to reform the government of towns. After <sup>Town life.</sup> the middle of the nineteenth century, and in the twentieth century to an immensely increasing extent, municipalities took in hand, on the whole with advantage to their towns, the supply of such things as gas, water, tramways, and baths, and attempted to deal with the housing problem.

Not only was there a great increase of population, but an even greater increase of wealth in the nineteenth century. It has been reckoned that the aggregate wealth of the United Kingdom, which at the beginning of the nineteenth century was <sup>Increase of wealth.</sup> £2,000,000,000, was at its end £15,000,000,000. Not only did great manufacturers, "Captains of Industry", arise and make large fortunes, but there was a striking increase in the numbers and prosperity of the middle and lower middle classes. To most of the labouring classes the factory system in the nineteenth century meant, in the long run, greater regularity of work, bigger wages, better organization, and far less waste of human effort, and it employed a far greater number than was possible under the old system. Moreover, the ease of communication, and the enormous increase in the output and variety of manufactured goods and their infinitely greater cheapness, enabled the many to enjoy comforts and conveniences that hitherto only the few had been privileged to possess.


Yet the new conditions brought in their train great evils, the mitigation of which has been—since the Reform Bill of 1832—one of the chief occupations of Parliament. We have already alluded to the conditions of the towns. <sup>Evils of new system, and how remedied.</sup> The new factory system, again, led—perhaps inevitably at first—to grave abuses. The factories were often unwholesome and insanitary; there was no *maximum* of working hours, no *minimum* of ventilation or cleanliness, no adequate precautions against dangerous machinery or <sup>Abuses of factory system.</sup> unhealthy trades demanded by the State. Most horrible

<sup>1</sup> It was reckoned that in the year of Queen Victoria's accession one-tenth of the population of Manchester and one-seventh of that of Liverpool lived in cellars, whilst in Bethnal Green, which was fairly thickly populated, there was not one sewer.



of all, perhaps, was the employment of children, who at an early age were sent in thousands by workhouses, charitable institutions, or by their parents to work long hours under the most depressing conditions. A committee appointed as late as 1840 found in manufactories<sup>1</sup> and in mines that, though boys and girls on the average began work between seven and nine years of age and worked twelve hours a day, yet they not infrequently began work as early as four years of age,<sup>2</sup> and they were sometimes employed for sixteen or eighteen hours consecutively. Moreover, children in mines were often at work in the wet, in absolute darkness, and in an atmosphere in which a candle would not burn, opening and shutting trapdoors all day long, or dragging, tied by girdle and chain and on hands and knees, loads of coal unduly heavy for them.

Gradually these conditions were improved, chiefly through the agency of a great series of Factory Laws—some forty in all.

 The Factory Laws. The first effective Act was that of 1833 which

applied to textile mills, such as cotton and woollen mills. It forbade the employment of *children* under nine in the mills, insisted that those between nine and thirteen should have two hours a day in school, and limited the hours of work of those between thirteen and eighteen to sixty-eight hours per week. Then in 1842 an Act was passed which prohibited the employment underground of children under ten, and of women. In 1847, chiefly owing to the exertions of *Lord Shaftesbury*, and in spite of much opposition in Parliament, came the great Act which limited the hours of boys and girls under eighteen and of women in many factories to *ten* hours per day—an Act which had the effect indirectly of reducing the work of the men in many industries to the same number of hours.

Since the mid-century, State interference has steadily increased. Laws have been passed which sought to remedy the other evils of factory life, by insisting, for instance, upon a certain standard of ventilation and cleanliness, and laying down minute regulations about dangerous industries such as mining; whilst an army of inspectors has been appointed to see that these various

<sup>1</sup> Other than cotton mills, where it was forbidden by law; see next paragraph.

<sup>2</sup> In 1832 a case was recorded of a child at work in the lace trade before it was 2, and of a four-year-old in the same family working 12 hours a day.



laws are enforced.<sup>1</sup> Not only factories and workshops but hotels and shops have come under State supervision; and a series—beginning in 1897—of Workmen's Compensation Acts was passed which has practically compelled all employers of labour to insure their workmen and servants against the risks which may arise out of their employment.<sup>2</sup>

In Scotland, owing to the system of education established in 1696 (see p. 458), the people were more or less educated, but in England and Wales the ignorance of the people was as appalling as the conditions under which many of them used to live and work. <sup>The ignorance of the people.</sup> The Commission of 1840—already alluded to—found people who had never heard of London or of America, of Jesus Christ or of God except in an oath, and it is reckoned that, of the boys and girls of thirteen or fourteen years old, half could not read and nearly three-quarters could not write. Yet something in the way of education was already done before this. Towards the close of the eighteenth century Sunday schools had been started in most districts. Early in the nineteenth century two societies had been founded in order to build and maintain schools. In 1833 the State began to interest itself in education by making an annual grant of £10,000 to each of these societies, whilst in this same year a Factory Act insisted that children in cotton mills should have instruction for at least two hours a day. By degrees and through voluntary efforts the schools increased.

In 1870 a new era opened in English education. In that year an Act was passed; the Elementary Education Act, by which the education of all children up to the age of 13—raised subsequently to 14—was made compulsory; and popularly elected School Boards were created to supervise it in districts where there was no school already built by voluntary effort, or where the ratepayers desired it. At first the parents had to contribute to their children's education, but twenty-one years later—in 1891—Education was made free. Then in 1902 came another very important Education Act. Under this Act, first the general control of education was, subject to the

<sup>1</sup> Some 280,000 factories, warehouses, docks, and quays are to-day under the supervision of these inspectors who pay about 350,000 visits of inspection each year.

<sup>2</sup> The annual amount paid out in compensation is about £6,000,000.



supervision of the Board of Education, vested in each county in the County Council (p. 643), and, in a large town, in the Borough Council. Then, secondly, the Act made provision for secondary education. As a consequence, a large number of secondary schools were founded in all parts of England and Wales, and their development has constituted perhaps the greatest educational feature of the twentieth century. Thirdly, the Act made County and County Borough Councils responsible for supplying, or aiding the supply of, Technical Education, which had already made considerable progress through such institutions as Mechanics' Institutes and Polytechnics.<sup>1</sup> The community now provides for the education, in whole or in part, of some eight million pupils and students in the various types of school—at a cost of some ninety millions a year in rates and taxes.

Scotland had, as we have seen, a long start in education; but even in that country reforms were necessary. By an Act passed in 1872, the control of the parish and other schools was transferred to elected School Boards, and the cost of maintaining the schools was borne by the rates; in 1882 better provision was made for secondary education, and a few years later elementary education was made free. The Education (Scotland) Act of 1918 abolished the School Boards, and divided Scotland. the country into larger administrative areas under Education Authorities elected by the local government electors. By the Local Government (Scotland) Act of 1929, another change took place and the education authorities now are the County Councils, and the Town Councils of Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee, and Aberdeen. Each of these authorities has an Education Committee, and each parish or group of parishes has a subordinate School Management Committee.

If the new conditions in trade and industry have made employment more stable for the great majority, they have made it more precarious for many. A large number of people are occupied in casual labour, such as the dockers, whose means of livelihood are uncertain, or in seasonal trades, such as building, which depend upon the weather. In the large towns, instead of learning a trade as an apprentice,

<sup>1</sup> The first Mechanics' Institute was set up in London at Birkbeck College in 1824.



boys on leaving school plunge into occupations in which there is no future, for the sake of the immediate wages offered.<sup>1</sup> People, again, who have acquired skill in one particular industry or occupation may find, as the result of a new machine or a new fashion, "their niche in industry broken up".<sup>2</sup> Trade, it is said, goes in cycles; years of prosperity are followed by years of depression, and many workers are consequently thrown out of employment. In the nineteenth century the worst periods of depression seem to have been during the years just before and just after the close of the great war with Napoleon, and for the five years succeeding the accession of Queen Victoria, whilst the civil war in America produced a cotton famine which had dreadful results in Lancashire in 1861. Of unemployment in more recent times we shall say something later (p. 759).

As a result of all this, new and complex problems of poverty arose, problems which, so far, the State has not been successful in solving. It may be convenient here to trace the history of the *Poor Laws* in England. In England and Wales, under the Poor Law passed at the end of Elizabeth's reign (1601), each parish looked after its own poor, and overseers were appointed in each parish for this purpose. The impotent were to be relieved, the children to be apprenticed, and the able-bodied set to work; whilst the rogue or sturdy beggar caught "begging or misordering himself" was to be whipped, and then put to work or sent to a house of correction. But in the eighteenth century some fatal mistakes were made. In the first place, in 1782, a law was passed enacting that work must be found near his own home for an able-bodied man who applied for relief. Such a law led to work being undertaken which was often unnecessary and wasteful. Then, in 1795, during the great war, the Berkshire magistrates ordered that outdoor relief (i.e. relief outside the workhouse) should be given to those who applied, on a scale fixed according to the price of corn and the children in the family, and this policy was adopted in many other counties. No stigma attached to, nor were enquiries made about, nor any test

The Poor Law  
of Elizabeth.

<sup>1</sup> Indeed in London nearly three-fourths of the boys go into unskilled occupations.

<sup>2</sup> Perhaps the artisans in the eighteenth century were not to be altogether blamed if, foreseeing this, they broke into the house of Hargreaves and destroyed his machine, and so persecuted Kay that he had to fly to Paris.



of poverty imposed upon, those who applied for relief. Such a policy was disastrous. The lot of the pauper was often preferable to that of the independent labourer, whilst in some places the wages were reduced, the labourer having the deficiency made up by outdoor relief. Consequently the cost of relief went up by leaps and bounds,<sup>1</sup> and in many places land went out of cultivation because it no longer paid, with such heavy rates, to till it.

A Commission which sat in 1834 proposed a new scheme, which was adopted. The parishes—some fifteen thousand in number—were grouped into six hundred and forty-three *Unions*. Each Union was controlled, subject to the general supervision of a Poor Law Commission, and subsequently of the Local Government Board, by Boards of Guardians, who were popularly elected from the districts comprised in the union, and whose officials—the relieving officers—had to enquire into the condition of applicants for relief. Outdoor relief (i.e. relief outside the workhouse in money or kind) might be given to the sick and aged, to widows and children. But on the able-bodied man was imposed the “workhouse test”; he was, as a rule, only to be allowed relief inside the workhouse, and his lot there was to be less desirable than that of the independent labourer outside.

There is no doubt that under this system many of the abuses which had crept in were swept away. A Commission, however, which issued its report in 1909 proved that the system was not altogether satisfactory. No successful attempt was made to link private charity and State relief together. The Local Government Board—now the Board of Health—did not have sufficient powers of supervision. The Boards of Guardians showed a most astonishing variety in their methods of relief, and proved themselves sometimes inefficient and sometimes corrupt, whilst little interest was shown in their election. The “workhouse test” was in many cases neglected, and the workhouses themselves were places in which “old and young, infirm and able-bodied, imbeciles and epileptics” were crowded together. In 1929, a Local Government Act was, however, passed. This Act abolished the Poor Law Guardians and put the administration

<sup>1</sup> In one village, for instance, the rates for the relief of the poor, though there was hardly any increase in the population, rose from under £11 in 1801 to £367 in 1832.



of the Poor Law into the hands of Public Assistance Committees who were nominated by and responsible to the County Councils and County Borough Councils.

The history of the Poor Law in Scotland has been somewhat different. By an Act passed in 1579 each parish looked after its own poor. But relief was not given to the able-bodied, and there were no poorhouses, whilst in most parishes money relief was obtained, not by compulsory rates, but by other means, such as voluntary contributions. Consequently in Scotland it was not the profusion but the exiguity in the relief given, not the extravagance but the parsimony of the local authorities, which were the chief evils. But in 1845 a law was passed which recommended the provision of poorhouses, and which ordered compulsory rates where necessary. The Poor Law Commission of 1909, however, found grave defects in the Scottish system. The parishes, which (except in the large towns) remained the unit of administration, were in many districts either too small or too large, whilst the prohibition of outdoor relief to the able-bodied, where it was not evaded, often led to great hardships being inflicted. The Local Government (Scotland) Act of 1929 made sweeping changes in Poor Law administration—Parish Councils were abolished, and the County Councils and the Burgh Councils of "large" burghs (burghs with a population of over 20,000) became the Poor Law authorities. Each County and Burgh Council has a Poor Relief Committee. Committees of the (County) District Councils and the Burgh Councils of "small" burghs (population under 20,000) perform the same duties with regard to the Poor Law as do the parish, district, and municipal borough councils in England.

It has been evident from this brief summary that the State has taken, to an increasing extent, a larger share in controlling the lives of its citizens. It has concerned itself with the education of the young, with the care of the destitute, with the protection of the workers. It has passed laws regulating the Public Health (p. 634) and the supply of food; it has arbitrated in disputes between masters and men. Of its further activities in the twentieth century we shall have more to say in a later chapter (Chap. LV, § 2). Yet it must not be supposed that the State has brought about all the improvements

The Poor Law  
in Scotland.

Growth of  
State  
interference.



that have taken place. Employers became more humane; private charity did much to alleviate distress; education was still largely assisted by voluntary effort.

Finally the workmen themselves by Co-operation and by Trade Unions, helped to better their own lot. As far back as the fourteenth century there were associations of wage-earners. But these were not like modern Trade Unions which are, to quote the leading authority on their history, "continuous associations of wage-earners for the purpose of maintaining or improving the conditions of their working lives". Though the earliest union of this kind—that of the Hatters—claims to date from the time of Charles II (1667), the Trade Unions in the main are a product of the last two hundred years. At first they developed chiefly in the textile trades; but in the second half of the nineteenth century a union, for instance, which served as a model for others was that of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, which in 1851 united together the various other unions of engineers, and which gave sick and unemployed pay and pensions to its members. At the end of the nineteenth century the unions began to take an active part in politics and in particular in founding the Labour Party (pp. 641, 764). At the present time there are altogether nearly 1100 Trade Unions with a total membership not far short of 5 millions.

In Law the Trade Unions have gone through many vicissitudes. In 1800 the Combination Act was passed, under which any artisan organizing a strike or joining a Trade Union was liable to imprisonment—though as a matter of fact this was a law very difficult to enforce. This law was repealed in 1825. But, under the Common Law, a strike might still be a conspiracy—namely, a combination to do an unlawful act or to do a lawful act by unlawful means; and a Trade Union could not claim the protection of the law. Then in 1875 a Combination Act was passed which was the exact opposite of that of 1800; for it treated the strike as a perfectly lawful proceeding, legalized "peaceful picketing", and gave the Trade Unions a recognized position (p. 634). In 1906, an Act—the Trade Disputes Act—was passed, which gave the Trade Unions almost a privileged position, because the Courts were not allowed to entertain any action against them in their corporate capacity, and they were



no longer held financially responsible for the illegal actions of their officials in a strike. Then in 1927 came a new Act—the Trade Disputes and Trade Unions Act—which, amongst other things, made illegal the use of the strike for political or non-industrial purposes.

## XLIV. Politics and Parties, 1815-32

The effects of the "Industrial Revolution" were felt not less in political than in other spheres of national life. The growth of the big towns, the increase in the numbers and importance of the middle class, all contributed to make it impossible to continue a system under which the vast majority of people had no vote, and the members of the House of Lords, through their influence over "pocket boroughs", nominated a large proportion of the members of the House of Commons (see Ch. XXXVI). The reform of Parliament was bound to come, and it is only surprising that it should have been delayed till 1832. The influence, however, of the French Revolution upon English opinion had been that reform was associated with revolution or with a military despotism like that of Napoleon. Moreover, the great war had occupied the energies of Great Britain until 1815. And after the war was over, her attention was at first taken up with matters other than political reform. Finally, when the agitation for reform did come, it was not immediately successful.

Influence  
of  
Industrial  
Revolution  
upon  
politics.

Consequently, for the first seventeen years after the battle of Waterloo the British Constitution remained unchanged. The eldest son of George III exercised the powers of the monarchy, first after 1811 as *Prince Regent*, and then after 1820 as *King George IV*; but his private life was so disreputable that he was despised and disliked by the best elements in the nation; and the power and influence of the Monarchy was, as a consequence, seriously weakened. The Government remained under the control of the landowning oligarchy; the Tory section of it was in power, first under Lord Liverpool till 1827, and later on under the Duke of Wellington.

George,  
Prince  
Regent,  
1811-20,  
and King,  
1820-30.



Finally, however, in 1830, a Whig ministry, pledged to Parliamentary reform, came into office.

## I. Years of Distress, 1815-22

This period of seventeen years may be still further subdivided. The first seven years (1815-22) were years of even greater distress for the people than the later years of the Napoleonic War, and those who thought that times of peace were necessarily times of prosperity were grievously disappointed. British shippers, instead of enjoying a monopoly of the carrying trade, found eager rivals. British manufacturers found a great reduction in the demand for their goods both at home and abroad, partly because munitions of war were no longer required, and partly because foreign nations began to develop their own manufactures. British farmers found that the price of corn was nearly halved. In addition to this there were heavy taxes and some very bad harvests, especially that in 1816. As a result, there was a general depression in every industry. Mills were closed, iron furnaces blown out, and farms given up in many districts. Artisans and agricultural labourers, soldiers and sailors, were thrown out of work, and the numbers of the unemployed were further swelled owing to the transition from hand labour to machinery referred to in the last chapter. Nor did the poor gain the full effects of the reduced price of corn, as the price of bread did not decrease proportionately.

Causes of  
distress,  
1815-22.

As a result of the widespread distress, many riots arose. In the midland counties the riots—called Luddite<sup>1</sup> after the name of the man who originated them—took the form of the destruction of machinery. In London a mob, whose leader demanded universal suffrage and annually elected Parliaments, marched from Spa Fields with the intention of seizing the Tower, and did actually reach the City and effect some damage before it was dispersed. In Derby a riot, in which it is said some five hundred rioters were routed by eighteen hussars, was

Riots in  
Great  
Britain.

<sup>1</sup> Ned Ludd was a village idiot in a Leicestershire village. Baited one day, he pursued his tormentors into a house and broke some machines. Hence, when machines were afterwards broken, it became customary to say that Ludd had broken them.



dignified with the name of an insurrection. In Manchester in 1819 a great meeting of some fifty thousand people was held in order to press for reform. The magistrates considered such a meeting illegal, tried to arrest its leaders, and finally ordered the yeomanry to do so. The yeomanry to carry out their orders had to charge the crowd, and in doing so twelve persons were killed, besides some hundreds of others injured—an action sometimes known as the *Manchester Massacre* or the *Battle of Peterloo*. A year later, in 1820, came what is known as the *Cato Street Conspiracy*. A plot was hatched by some men in Cato Street, London, the purpose being to murder all the members of the cabinet whilst they were at a dinner party in Grosvenor Square, but the plot was fortunately discovered before it could be carried into effect. In Scotland also there was great discontent; a general strike took place in Glasgow in 1820, whilst at *Bonnymuir*, in Stirlingshire, the yeomanry had to fight a mob of armed insurgents.

In dealing with this critical situation the Tory Government relied upon two cures. To encourage farming, a law was passed forbidding the importation of corn till the price was 80s. per quarter, a law which, however, increased also the price of bread and therefore the distress of the poorer classes. To discourage agitation and rioting, resort was had to coercion. The leaders of the mob were tried, and, if found guilty, were executed. The Habeas Corpus Act was suspended, and people therefore could be kept in prison without being brought up at once for trial. And, finally, in 1819 Parliament passed what are known as the *Six Acts* or the *Gag Acts*—the most important being one which imposed a heavy stamp duty on pamphlets, and another making the calling of big public meetings illegal without the consent of the mayor of a town or the lord-lieutenant of a county.

This policy of coercion, though successful, was not popular. Moreover, on George IV's accession to the throne in 1820, the unpopularity of the Government was further increased by their attempt to pass, at the King's instigation, a bill of divorce against Queen Caroline, whom George had married in 1795, though he had lived apart from her for some time. Popular opinion was strongly in favour of the Queen, and when the Government majority in the House of Lords sank to 9, the bill was abandoned.



Though the death of the Queen in 1821 saved further complications, the Government was discredited.

## 2. Beginning of Reforms, 1822-7

With 1822 begins the second of our subdivisions. In that year what was to all intents and purposes a new ministry came into power, though it had the same leader in Lord Liverpool. Of the more reactionary or ultra-Tory ministers who had influenced the Government's policy, Addington retired from office (though not at once from the cabinet), and Lord Castlereagh, (pp. 551, 650), the Foreign Secretary and Leader of the House of Commons, committed suicide. The chief of the new leaders in the cabinet was *Canning*.

Changes in  
Lord Liver-  
pool's  
ministry,  
1822.

*Canning*. He had had a brilliant youth. At Eton he had edited a paper with such ability that a London publisher gave him £50 for its copyright. Whilst at Oxford, he was introduced to Fox, and was invited to the great Whig houses. The French Revolution, however, converted him into a Tory, and he became, in 1796, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs in Pitt's ministry, and made some famous contributions, satirizing the supporters of the Revolution, in a weekly newspaper called the *Anti-Jacobin*. On Pitt's resignation in 1801 Canning went out of office, but from 1804-6 he was a member of Pitt's second administration. In 1807 he became Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in the Portland ministry. The timely seizure of the Danish fleet in that year was due to him, and he was a strong supporter of our intervention in Spain and Portugal. Differences of opinion in the ministry between Castlereagh and Canning led to a duel between them in 1809,<sup>1</sup> but neither was seriously injured. Shortly afterwards, on Perceval becoming Prime Minister, Canning resigned, though, as an independent member, he advocated energetic measures in the Peninsula. When the war was over, he had served for four years in Lord Liverpool's ministry. In politics a moderate Tory, he became in 1822 Leader of the House of Commons and Secretary for Foreign Affairs. Two other moderate

<sup>1</sup> The disagreement arose out of the failure of the Walcheren Expedition in 1809. In the duel each missed his first shot; Canning's second shot hit the button of Lord Castlereagh's coat, and Lord Castlereagh's second wounded Canning in the thigh.



Tories took prominent offices: Huskisson became President of the Board of Trade, and Peel took Addington's place as Home Secretary.

As a result of this reconstitution of the ministry, the period of legislative stagnation, as it has been called, which had lasted for some sixty years, came to an end. During the next five years (1822-7) many useful reforms were made. *Canning* inaugurated a new Liberal foreign policy (p. 651). Proposals were made—which were not converted into laws till later—to make the Corn Laws of 1815 less stringent. *Huskisson* succeeded in repealing the Combination Act of 1800 (p. 602), and the Navigation Laws (p. 397), which were held to be no longer necessary to protect our shipping. Considered in his own time an advanced free trader, Huskisson was in reality a moderate protectionist who abolished many of the duties on raw material, but who took care, whilst reducing the absurdly high duties on foreign manufactures, still to give some measure of protection to British manufactures by duties ranging from 30 to 15 per cent. At the same time he developed the prosperity of the Colonies by encouraging emigration, by relaxing the Corn Laws in the case of colonial corn, and, above all, by allowing foreign countries to trade directly with them.

Meantime *Peel* revised the *Criminal Code* and mitigated its severity. At the beginning of the nineteenth century it was a capital offence, for which a man might be hanged, to rob a shopkeeper of goods to the value of 5s. or over, or to pick a man's pockets, or to steal a sheep, or to poach a rabbit warren. It was largely due to Peel that the number of capital offences, which used to be no less than a hundred and sixty in number, has been gradually reduced till those of murder and treason are alone left. At the same time the fact that men were growing more humane is shown in the first attempts to prevent cruelty to dumb animals, and in the prohibition of spring-guns and man-traps, which had been not infrequently used in past times by game-preserving landlords.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Game Laws used to be very severe. As late as 1816 an Act was passed punishing with transportation for seven years any person found by night in open ground having in his possession any net or engine for the purpose of taking any hare, rabbit, or other game.



### 3. 1827-32, Catholic Emancipation and the Reform Bills

The third subdivision begins in 1827. The resignation of Lord Liverpool, in February of that year, followed six months later by the death of Canning after a short tenure of the premiership, opens a new period. The time for political reform had at last arrived. The next *five years* (1827-32) are taken up, first, with the struggle to secure *Catholic emancipation*, i.e. to allow Roman Catholics to sit in Parliament and to hold offices; and, secondly, with the struggle to secure the *reform of the House of Commons* itself. The first of these struggles took place during the premiership of the Duke of Wellington. The duke became Prime Minister in 1828, and his chief supporter was Peel. On Catholic emancipation Lord Liverpool's cabinet had been divided, Canning, for instance, being in its favour and Peel against it. But O'Connell's success in Ireland (p. 644) made both the Duke and Peel feel that it was impossible to resist the reform any longer. George IV, after withstanding the appeals and arguments of his ministers in a five hours' interview, finally agreed to the bill being introduced, and it was passed. Henceforth Roman Catholics had the same rights as Protestants, except that they could not hold the office of Lord High Chancellor or Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland or succeed to the throne. Jews, however, continued to be excluded from the House of Commons up till 1858.

In securing Catholic emancipation, Wellington lost the support of the extreme Tories without gaining the support of the Whigs. Moreover, he was too much of a soldier; his temperament was too domineering and his methods too arbitrary to make him a good prime minister, and he had to resign.

The fall of Wellington's ministry in 1830 followed immediately after the death of George IV. To the latter succeeded

William IV and  
Lord Grey's  
ministry, 1830.

*William IV*, a genial and not illiberal monarch, and one who was personally popular. To Wellington's ministry succeeded a Whig ministry, the first since the ill-fated coalition of 1783. Its leader was *Lord Grey*. He was a high-minded and honourable Whig nobleman,



genuinely devoted to Parliamentary reform; moreover, he was a good orator, though perhaps of too cold a temperament to arouse much popular enthusiasm. His chief lieutenants were *Lord Brougham*, the Lord Chancellor, a brilliant and erratic man, who, it was said, "knew a little of everything except law", *Lord Althorp*, who led the House of Commons, and three statesmen who subsequently became prime ministers—*Lord Melbourne*, *Lord John Russell*, and *Lord Palmerston*, who made a conspicuous mark as Foreign Secretary (p. 654).

The Whigs had long been in favour of Parliamentary reform, and Lord Grey's Government made the passing of a *Reform Bill* their first and greatest object. The case for reform was strong (p. 480). Yet the opposition on the part of the Tories was fierce and protracted. The Government, amidst intense excitement, carried the second reading of its first Reform Bill in the House of Commons by a majority of one in the largest division known till that time (March, 1831).<sup>1</sup> But in the consideration of the details in committee the Government was defeated. Accordingly the Government dissolved Parliament, and as the result of a general election obtained a largely increased majority. The new House of Commons accordingly passed through all its stages a Reform Bill which was, however, rejected by the House of Lords. A third bill accordingly followed, which the House of Lords mutilated.

The struggle  
for the  
Reform Bill,  
1831-2.

The popular excitement and indignation were now overwhelming. In London the mob broke the windows of the Duke of Wellington's house,<sup>2</sup> and tried to drag him from his horse when he was riding through the City of London. The men of Birmingham threatened to refuse to pay taxes, and to march twenty thousand strong upon London, and the Bristol men burnt and sacked the Mansion-House and other places in that city. Additional troops had to be sent north to deal with threatened disorders in Scotland. The ministry, to bring matters to a crisis, resigned. The Duke of Wellington tried to form a ministry, but failed, and Lord Grey accordingly returned to power. The third

<sup>1</sup> "You might have heard a pin drop," Macaulay wrote, "as Duncannon read the numbers. Then again the shouts broke out, and many of us shed tears. I could scarcely refrain." See the account in Macaulay's *Life and Letters*.

<sup>2</sup> The Duke consequently put up iron shutters, which remained till his death.



bill was sent up again to the House of Lords. The Duke, realizing that civil war was imminent, and that the king had agreed, if necessary, to create new peers,<sup>1</sup> gave way, and with his followers abstained from voting. The bill was passed, received the king's assent, and at last became law (June, 1832).

## XLV. Politics and Parties, 1832-67

### 1. The British Constitution after 1832

To Liberal enthusiasts the passing of the Reform Bill was the panacea for all human ills; even children, it is said, went about their playgrounds shouting, "The Reform Bill has passed! The Reform Bill has passed!" To the Tories, on the other hand, the passing of the bill meant the downfall of Great Britain; and the Duke of Wellington expressed the opinion that in six weeks' time Lord Grey would be out of office, and that henceforward no gentleman would be able to take part in public affairs. Yet in itself the Reform Bill appears to us now a mild measure. It abolished a great number of "rotten" and "pocket" boroughs, a hundred and forty-three seats in all, and gave them to counties or large towns. The franchise in the counties was extended to copyholders<sup>2</sup> and long leaseholders of lands worth £10 a year, or to tenants-at-will of lands worth £50 a year, and in the boroughs to holders of houses worth £10 a year. But it is reckoned that under the bill only one person out of every twenty-four of the whole population had a vote.

The Reform Bill of 1832, nevertheless, broke down the monopoly of power possessed by the landowning aristocracy, and by giving the vote to the middle class altered the centre of gravity in politics. Moreover, once a Reform Bill was passed, other bills were bound to follow.

The Reform Bills of 1867, 1884, 1918, and 1928.

<sup>1</sup> "The king", so ran the document from the king, "grants permission to Earl Grey and to his chancellor, Lord Brougham, to create such a number of peers as will be sufficient to ensure the passing of the Reform Bill, first calling up peers' eldest sons."

<sup>2</sup> A copyholder is almost as complete an owner of land as the freeholder. The land does not belong to him, but practically he cannot be dispossessed of it without his consent.



In 1867 came the second Reform Bill, which gave the vote to the better-class artisan in the towns—and one in twelve of the population had a vote. And then, in 1884, the vote was given to the agricultural labourer in country districts and to nearly all men in towns—and one in seven had a vote. Then by Acts passed in 1918 and 1928, women got the vote—and so at the present time nearly two out of three of the population have votes. In fact practically every one has a vote who is not a minor, an alien, a criminal serving sentence, a lunatic, or a peer.

The Duke of Wellington's prophecy with regard to gentlemen ceasing to be able to take part in politics proved to be signally wrong. No doubt members after 1832 were drawn from a wider circle, and more merchants and more lawyers were elected than formerly, but the old governing families, and what is sometimes called the Public School Class still had, in the nineteenth century, great influence.<sup>1</sup> Though, however, the character of our legislators did not greatly alter, yet the character of legislation did. The period of quiescence in legislation came finally to an end. The rival programmes of each party were full of legislative promises, and to an increasing extent, as the franchise was extended, this legislation has been passed for the benefit of the working classes. Moreover, the methods of politics changed. Reporters were admitted to the debates. The sessions were more protracted. Members became more regular in their attendance. Again, public meetings became far more common. Canning was the first great statesman to address them, but the prejudice against ministers in high office speaking in the country lingered for some time, and even as late as 1886 Queen Victoria objected to Mr. Gladstone addressing public meetings outside his own constituency.

We have already discussed the working of our Constitution between 1714 and 1832 (Chap. XXXVI), and we may say something about its practice from 1832 till the early years of the twentieth century. First of all, as to the *Crown*. It is difficult to estimate exactly the importance of the Crown influence since the Reform Bill. In

Changes  
in politics  
after 1832.

Working of the  
Constitution  
after 1832.

<sup>1</sup> In the House of Commons of 1865 one-quarter of the members were connected with thirty-one families; and in that of 1900 one-quarter had been educated at Eton or Harrow.



the sphere of foreign politics, however, its influence has probably been considerable. The increasing knowledge and experience which Queen Victoria, for instance, possessed, and her close family connection with most of the crowned heads of Europe (p. 617), were assets of great value in the conduct of foreign policy; and Queen Victoria insisted on seeing all the foreign dispatches, and being informed and consulted on Foreign affairs (p. 658). Then, again, the personality of Edward VII was undoubtedly a factor in withdrawing Great Britain from the dangerous isolation into which she had fallen. In Home politics, the Crown, because of its independence and disinterestedness, has been eminently qualified to play the part of candid critic, and to prevent ministers being influenced by merely party considerations. More especially in the higher appointments, whether in Church or State, its opinions carry weight.

It is, however, in times of crisis that the need of the Crown is greatest. An alteration made by Queen Victoria in a dispatch probably saved us from a war with America in 1861, and the singular felicitousness of the proclamation to the Indian peoples after the Indian Mutiny was due to her suggestions. The Crown, moreover, must choose the Prime Minister. Sometimes it had to persuade statesmen to work together in a Ministry, as in Lord Aberdeen's ministry of 1852, or to act as mediator between the rival parties, as in the Irish Church question in 1869.<sup>1</sup> But the greatest influence of the Crown lies in its influence upon the Empire. The Crown can express, on behalf of the whole Empire, the feelings of all; and every part of the Empire can bear gladly the "golden fetters" lightly imposed through its existence. And, as we shall see (p. 766), the Crown, as a result of the passing of the Statute of Westminster in 1931, is now the only link connecting the various parts of the Empire together.

The *House of Lords* in the period after 1832 was still powerful; but it no longer asserted its equality with the other House. Many bills, however, sent up by the House of Commons were rejected by the Upper House, though it has eventually passed most measures which it felt the nation really desired (but see p. 642). The *House of Commons* became, indeed, unquestionably the chief legislative body, and it is there that bills

The Houses of Parliament.

<sup>1</sup> To appreciate the part that the Crown has played, read the Queen's letters.



were exhaustively discussed. Above all, it was upon a majority in this House that the existence of a Ministry depended. For during this period the *Cabinet system* passed through the last stages of its evolution. Composed, except in the case of one or two Coalition ministries, of statesmen of the same party, the Cabinet met under the presidency of a Prime Minister, who selected its members and might procure their dismissal. It was collectively responsible for the actions of each of its members. Its meetings were secret. Up, indeed, till the World War of 1914, there was no Agenda circulated to Cabinet Ministers before the meetings and no records were kept of its proceedings, except the note of them which the Prime Minister used to send to the Sovereign.<sup>1</sup> But during the World War this somewhat unbusinesslike procedure was abandoned, and the members of Cabinet now have circulated to them a list of Agenda before, and copies of the minutes after the meetings. As the nineteenth century progressed, the Cabinet absorbed more and more of the time and energies of Parliament for the consideration of the Laws which it had brought forward, and for the expenditure and Taxes for which it was necessary to obtain approval.

## 2. The Whig Ministries of Lord Grey and Lord Melbourne, 1830-41

We took as the first period in our political history since 1815 the seventeen years that elapsed between the battle of Waterloo and the reform of Parliament. We may take as a second period the thirty-five years between the first and the second Reform Acts, the years between 1832 and 1867, sometimes known as the period of the *£10 Householder*, because it was on his vote that the Government of the day depended. Party politics during this period are hard to disentangle. The tenets of parties were, it has been said,

Characteristics  
of politics,  
1832-67.

<sup>1</sup> "It was not the custom in the Cabinet," says Lord Asquith, who was in the Cabinet 1892-95 and 1905-16, "to take a Division unless in exceptional cases, and it was left to the Prime Minister to collect and interpret the general sense of his colleagues. It was contrary to etiquette for any member of the Cabinet except the Prime Minister to take notes. No food or drink were allowed, except some hard biscuits, which were believed to date from the time of Pitt, and some plain water!"



"shifting, equivocal, and fluid". Statesmen were found first upon one side and then upon another. Lord Stanley held high office in Lord Grey's Whig cabinet of 1830, and subsequently, when Earl of Derby, formed three Conservative cabinets.<sup>1</sup> Lord Melbourne was in Wellington's Tory ministry of 1828, and became a few years later the prime minister of a Whig ministry. Gladstone started his political career, in Macaulay's phrase, as "the rising hope of the stern, unbending Tories", and ended it as an advanced Liberal. Peel was the great leader of the Tories, and yet his chief measures were those to which the Tory party had always been most strenuously opposed. While the extremes of the two British parties, Macaulay once said, are separated by a wide chasm, there is a frontier line where they almost blend. Many of the chief statesmen during these years were near the frontier line, and found it easy to cross over. The two extremes—the ultra-Tories on the one hand, and the Radicals on the other—had nothing in common; but then they did not possess much influence.

For eleven years, from 1830-41, the *Whigs*—or *Liberals* as they now began to be called—were in power. They had at first, under the leadership of *Lord Grey*, all the fresh energy of a party long exiled from office. As has been narrated, they reformed the system of election to the House of Commons in 1832. They reorganized, in 1834, the whole of our Poor Law system (p. 600). They abolished slavery in the British dominions (p. 704). They passed the first really effective factory law for remedying the grave abuses in cotton mills, and made the first State grant towards education (page 597). But disagreements about Irish policy led to the resignation, first of Lord Stanley, and later of Lord Althorp; and upon the resignation of the latter, Lord Grey, already over seventy years of age, insisted upon retiring from office (1834).

*Lord Melbourne* succeeded as Prime Minister in 1834. Lord Palmerston remained Foreign Secretary (p. 654), and Lord John Russell became leader of the House; but Lord Brougham's services as lord chancellor were soon dispensed with. The

<sup>1</sup> Curiously enough his son, after being Foreign Secretary in Disraeli's Conservative Government of 1874, became ten years later Colonial Secretary in Gladstone's Liberal Government.



Melbourne ministry succeeded in remaining in office almost continuously for seven years. There were, however, two crises. In the very year of its formation, in 1834, William IV dismissed it because he objected to its policy—interesting as being the last occasion on which the Crown, on its own initiative, has thus acted. Peel was summoned from Rome to form a ministry, and at once dissolved Parliament; but, finding himself in a minority in the newly elected House of Commons, he resigned after four months of power, and Melbourne returned.

Lord Melbourne's  
ministries, 1834,  
1835-41.

The second crisis, in 1839, was due to the so-called *Bed-chamber Question*. Melbourne resigned because he had been almost beaten in the House of Commons over Jamaican affairs. Peel was called upon by Queen Victoria, who had succeeded to the throne in 1837, to become Prime Minister. But he and Wellington, the other Tory leader, insisted upon the ladies of the Queen's household, who were Whigs, being replaced by those of a Tory character. No doubt Peel was constitutionally correct, but he showed some want of tact and discretion in his dealings with a young queen barely twenty years of age.<sup>1</sup> The upshot was that the queen refused to change her ladies, and that Melbourne, to the queen's great satisfaction, returned to power. For more than two years Melbourne lingered on, though there were some very close divisions in the House of Commons. Finally, in 1841, he was beaten by one vote, and dissolved Parliament. In the new House of Commons there was a decided Tory majority, and Lord Melbourne retired from office—this time for good.

During Lord Melbourne's leadership the Whigs had lost their reforming zeal. The Municipal Corporations Act, indeed, had been passed in 1835 (p. 595), and Penny Postage introduced in 1839 (p. 591). But the Ministry had adopted an illiberal policy towards Canada, and failed to prevent a rebellion in 1839. Its policy towards the Jamaican planters who objected to the emancipation of their slaves aroused opposition (p. 704). Its administration in Ireland had, all things considered, been successful, and won for it the unusual support, during a greater part of its career, of O'Connell, the leader of the Irish party in the House of

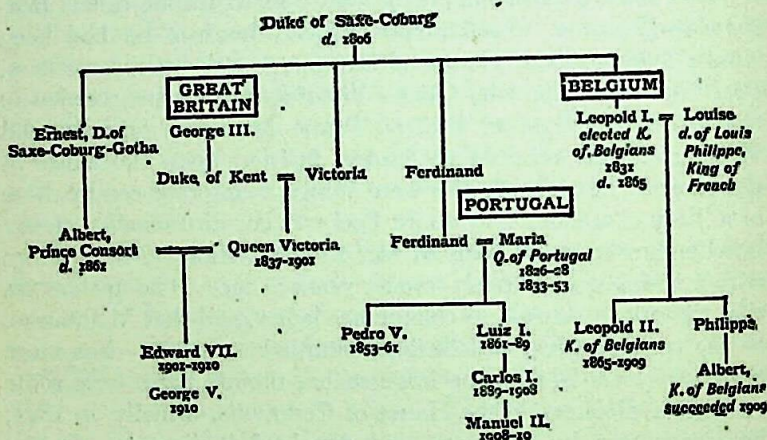
<sup>1</sup> There was some truth in the Duke of Wellington's remark: "Peel has no manners, and I have no small talk".



Commons; but the opponents of the ministry maintained, and with some reason, that it had not succeeded in keeping Ireland in order or repressing agrarian outrages.

On the whole, however, it was an advantage to the nation that Lord Melbourne remained in power for so long a period. He had not been, it is true, an inspiring leader for a reforming party. Though he supported in a lukewarm fashion the Reform Bill of 1832, he had prophesied that its result would be "a prevalence of the blackguard interest in Parliament"; and he was against "any tampering

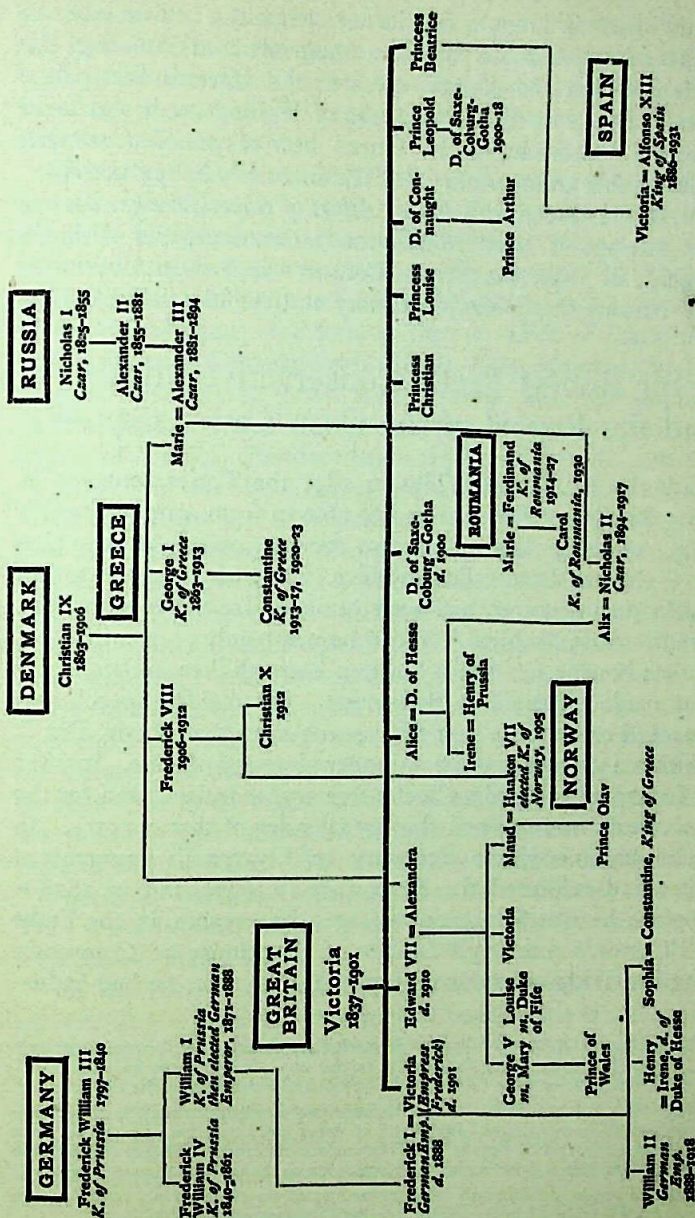
Character  
and influ-  
ence of  
Lord Mel-  
bourne.



Family Connections of the Prince Consort

with the Corn Laws". He was a liberally minded and cultured man, but he thought the Reforms of Lord Grey's ministry had gone quite far enough. "Why not leave it alone?" was his invariable query to proposals emanating from the more advanced sections of his party. "It doesn't matter what we say, but we must all say the same thing," was said to have been his remark at a cabinet meeting. But his shrewdness and humour, combined with his kindness and tact, which kept his cynicism under control, made him just the sage and worldly-wise counsellor that a young queen who had been brought up in retirement by a German mother required. He was in constant attendance upon her during the early years of her reign, acting as her secretary and





Genealogical Table showing Family Connections of Queen Victoria



spending often six hours a day in her company; and no one can read the correspondence between them without realizing the great debt which the country owes to the Queen's first prime minister.<sup>1</sup> In the words of the Duke of Wellington, it was Lord Melbourne "who taught the Queen how to preside over the destinies of this great country". The singularly happy marriage, in 1840, of the Queen with *Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg* made the further tutelage of Lord Melbourne unnecessary, and with his retirement, in 1841, the Prince Consort—as Prince Albert was called—became the Queen's secretary and confidential adviser.

### 3. Sir Robert Peel's Conservative Ministry and the Repeal of the Corn Laws, 1841-6

With the fall of the Whigs in 1841 the Tories returned to power. *Sir Robert Peel* was at last able to form a more durable ministry than on the two previous occasions on which he had been called to office. Peel, who was the son of a wealthy manufacturer, had been destined, like the younger Pitt, for politics from his birth.<sup>2</sup> When he was barely of age, in 1809, his father bought for him a "rotten borough" in Ireland. He quickly made his mark in Parliament. His maiden speech was pronounced to be "the best first speech since that of Mr. Pitt", and within a year he became an under secretary of state. In 1812 Lord Liverpool made him Chief Secretary for Ireland, and for the next six years he remained the virtual ruler of that country. In 1822 he became Home Secretary in Liverpool's reorganized ministry and reformed the Penal Law (p. 607), and in 1828—just before he was forty years of age—he became, in the Duke of Wellington's ministry,<sup>3</sup> Leader of the House of Commons. During the Whig ascendancy, from 1830 to 1841, he had indus-

<sup>1</sup> "I have no doubt Lord Melbourne is passionately fond of her," wrote a contemporary, "as he might be of his daughter if he had one. It is become his province to educate, instruct, and form the most interesting mind and character in the world."

<sup>2</sup> When still a boy at Harrow he used to listen to the debates in the House of Commons. At Oxford he had worked very hard, studying just before his examination some eighteen hours a day, and he was the first Oxonian who obtained a double first in Classics and Mathematics; this was not possible before owing to the system of examinations.

<sup>3</sup> Whilst he was in Wellington's Ministry he formed the Metropolitan Police—hence their nicknames "peelers" or "bobbies", as his Christian name was Robert.



triously revived the energies of the Tory or, as he preferred to call it, the Conservative party. He had succeeded in introducing many important amendments into the Whig measures, and had recruited promising young men such as Gladstone and Disraeli to serve under his banner.

Peel thus found himself, in 1841, at the head of a great party, and his only difficulty with so much talent at his command was whom to exclude from office. The ministry which he eventually formed was exceptionally strong. It included four past or future Prime Ministers, in the

Characteristics of Peel's ministry, 1841-6.

*Duke of Wellington*, who held at first no office of State, though later he became Commander-in-Chief; *Lord Aberdeen*, the pacific Foreign Secretary (p. 656); *Lord Stanley*, who was responsible for the colonies; and *Gladstone*, who was given a post at the Board of Trade. Besides these, there was Peel's closest ally, *Graham*, who was Home Secretary, and an experienced and clever Lord Chancellor in *Lord Lyndhurst*. Yet in this galaxy of talent Peel stood pre-eminent. Though a shy man, cold and awkward in his manner towards his political followers,<sup>1</sup> he was a weighty and cogent speaker, and his skill and tact in managing Parliament made him, in Disraeli's opinion, the greatest member of Parliament that ever lived. His immense powers of work, the clearness of his intellect, and his great experience enabled him not only to spend eight hours a day in the House of Commons attending the debates, not only to conduct a huge correspondence, but also to supervise, to an extent which no subsequent prime minister has probably even attempted to equal, the affairs of the various departments of State. Mr. Gladstone thought Peel's ministry "a perfectly organized administration". "Neither the Grand Turk nor a Russian despot", said Cobden, the free trader, "had more power than Peel."

Of the four or five most memorable administrations of the century, it has been said, the great Conservative Government of Sir Robert Peel was undoubtedly one. It had to deal with a situation which required the exercise of its great talents. In Foreign Affairs, there was actual war with China, a prospective war with Afghanistan, relations strained almost to breaking-point with France, and boundary disputes with the United States. At

<sup>1</sup> It was described as "haughtily stiff or exuberantly bland".



home, there was in trade great depression; amongst the poor distress was wide-spread, and one person in every eleven was a pauper; rioting and sedition were rife; and the national revenue had shown during the last five years a heavy deficit. How the foreign difficulties were overcome is related elsewhere (p. 656).

**Peel's finance.** In domestic affairs, the first object of Peel's attention was the reorganization of national finance. He imposed an Income tax of 7d. in the pound. This not only remedied the deficit, but enabled him to lessen the burden of the customs duties. Continuing the policy of Huskisson, he—during his five years of office—reduced over a thousand of these duties and abolished over six hundred, and by so doing enabled the raw material for manufactures to be obtained far more cheaply and the cost of living to be reduced. This does not exhaust Peel's achievements in finance. By the *Bank Charter Act* of 1844 he reorganized the banking system of the country, and limited the issue of bank notes payable on demand, notes which in previous times bankers had been in the habit of circulating with dangerous profusion.

In company with many other Prime Ministers, Peel found Ireland a difficulty during his period of power. It is related elsewhere (p. 645) how Peel stifled the movement for the repeal of the Union under O'Connell, who was now in opposition to the Government. But Peel was not averse to Irish reforms. He

**Ireland.** made a grant towards the Roman Catholic College of Maynooth, and appointed a commission—known as the Devon Commission—to enquire into the Irish land question. Before, however, any legislation could be founded upon the report of this commission, a famine occurred in Ireland which was to cause not only the fall of Peel, but almost the destruction of the party which he led.

After the great war with Napoleon was over, a law was passed prohibiting the importation of foreign corn until the price of corn at home had reached 80s. per quarter **The Anti-Corn Law League.** (p. 605). Subsequently, in 1826, a sliding scale had been adopted whereby the duties on foreign corn varied with the price of corn at home. But gradually popular feeling was aroused against laws which made the price of bread so high. Since England's population had grown so big, it was no longer possible to grow enough corn at home cheaply, and bad seasons,



therefore, were apt to cause much distress. In 1838 the *Anti-Corn Law League* was founded by some Manchester merchants. The League was fortunate in its two orators, *Cobden* and *Bright*, the one the son of a small Sussex farmer, and by profession a Lancashire calico printer, and the other the son of a Lancashire cotton spinner. Cobden had the power of stating a case with such clearness that the dullest and most ignorant could understand it, whilst Bright's chief strength lay in his power of pulverizing the arguments of his opponents. These two, in Cobden's words, lived in public meetings, traversing Great Britain from end to end, proclaiming the doctrine of Free Trade, and exhorting the people to agitate for the abolition of the Corn Laws. Cobden was elected a member of the House of Commons in 1841, and Bright in 1843, and they proved a powerful reinforcement to the small band of free traders already in that assembly.

Peel had come into office at the head of a party which strongly favoured the maintenance of the Corn Laws. He had, however, already modified these laws in 1844, not without some dissatisfaction from members of his own party, and he seems gradually to have reached the conclusion that the interests of the nation demanded their total abolition. And then came the event which forced him to take immediate action. In 1845 a disease appeared in Ireland which ruined the potato crop of that and following years. More than half the population of Ireland depended for their food exclusively upon potatoes, and famine threatened the Irish people. Corn, the only possible substitute, was deficient in Great Britain owing to heavy July rains, and could not be imported from abroad except under heavy duties. Peel decided that these duties must be suspended and ultimately abolished. But he was unable to persuade the majority of his colleagues to agree with him, and accordingly resigned office. Lord John Russell, the leader of the Whigs, who had also declared for the abolition of the Corn Laws, was called upon to form a ministry. He failed, however, to do so, and Peel was then recalled.

With the exception of Lord Stanley, Peel was able to include in his new ministry all the more important of his former colleagues, for many Tories felt that the abolition of the Corn Laws, with Peel as leader, was at any rate preferable to a ministry



composed, in Wellington's phrase, of "Cobden and Co.", which might attempt reforms of even more radical a character. Fierce opposition, however, came from one section of the Tory party which held firm to Protection. Their leaders were *Lord George Bentinck* and *Benjamin Disraeli*. The latter, in a series of brilliant and virulent speeches, called Peel's Government an "organized hypocrisy", and said of Peel himself that he was a "sublime mediocrity",<sup>1</sup> and that he "was no more a great statesman than the man who gets up behind the carriage is a great whip". Peel nevertheless succeeded in persuading Parliament to repeal the Corn Laws; but he was beaten in an attempt to pass a Coercion Act dealing with the disorder in Ireland, and resigned—never to return to office again.

Twice, it was said, Peel had betrayed his party—once when he yielded over Catholic emancipation in 1829, and again when he repealed the Corn Laws. Whether his conduct, in either or both of these cases, was justifiable, will always be matter for controversy. It is not necessary, however, to doubt the sincerity of Peel's own change of view. He was one of those statesmen very near the border-line between the two parties, and he has been truly called the most Liberal of Conservatives and the most Conservative of Liberals. The truth seems to be that, though he was the leader, he was not really representative of the opinions of the party to which he belonged, his views being those of the middle class, from which he sprang, and not of the great landowners. And it was to his credit that he had the courage and open-mindedness to reconsider his opinions, and, if they changed, to act accordingly. A charge, however, that can be fairly urged against him is that he was secretive and reserved whilst re-forming his opinions, and gave his party scant notice of his change of view.

<sup>1</sup> Amongst other things, he compared Peel's conduct to that of the Turkish admiral who steered his fleet straight into the enemy's port, and who defended his conduct on the plea that he was an enemy to war, that he hated a prolonged contest, and that therefore he had terminated it by deserting the cause of his master.



#### 4. The Ministries of Lords John Russell and Aberdeen, 1846-55

Peel, by putting an end to Protection, had split his own party. One section, under Bentinck, Stanley, and Disraeli, in theory continued to remain Protectionists. Another, to which the Duke of Wellington, Lord Aberdeen, and Gladstone belonged, were known as Peelites, because they remained the faithful supporters of their old leader. As a result of the Tory disunion, the Whigs, under Lord John Russell, returned to office in 1846, and remained there till 1852. The ministry, however, was a Whig ministry of the old type, consisting of peers or the connections of peers, and the more advanced elements of the Liberal party were not represented. Ireland at first claimed the attention of the Government, and the ministry had to propose measures to alleviate the distress and to repress the disorder caused by the famine (p. 645).

Peelites and Protectionists.

Lord J. Russell's ministry, 1846-52.

A popular movement in Britain, known as the Chartist movement, was the next difficulty which faced the ministry. It obtained this name from the fact that its promoters had drawn up a "People's Charter" which demanded six concessions—manhood suffrage, vote by ballot, annual Parliaments, payment of members, abolition of property qualification for members of Parliament, and equal electoral districts. The movement had reached formidable dimensions in 1838, and had led to serious riots. After that it had been quiescent, only to show increased energy in 1848, owing to the great revolutions in that year all over Europe (p. 657). An Irishman, by name *Feargus O'Connor*, an enormous man with a great capacity for mob oratory, was its leader.<sup>1</sup> A monster petition was prepared, containing over five and a half million signatures. O'Connor's idea was to lead a gigantic procession and present the petition to the House of Commons. But the Duke of Wellington, as commander-in-chief, made such an arrangement of the troops that all prospects of disorder were

The Chartist movement, 1848.

<sup>1</sup> He appealed, he said, "to the unshaved chins, the blistered hands, and fustian jackets of the genuine working man."



dissipated, and, in addition, one hundred and seventy thousand special constables, drawn chiefly from the upper and middle classes, were sworn in to keep order if the need arose. In the end, on a wet day, the monster petition was taken to the House of Commons in a hackney coach, but the procession was not allowed to cross Westminster Bridge. Then the petition was examined, and more than half the signatures were discovered to be forgeries. The Chartist agitation failed to survive the ridicule and discredit that this revelation brought upon it, and died harmlessly away, though all except one of its original demands were granted in later years. Compared to the revolutions on the Continent, the Chartist movement in Britain was a very small affair; the forces on the side of order in Britain were too strong, and, moreover, the Government being based on popular support, the Chartist movement failed to win much national sympathy.

In 1852 Lord John Russell's ministry came to an end. The foreign policy of Lord Palmerston had been severely criticized by the Queen, and his methods were so irregular  
Fall of  
Lord J. Russell,  
1852. (p. 658) that he was forced by Lord John Russell to resign (1851). A few months later Palmerston had what he called his "Tit-for-tat" with Lord John Russell, and beat him in the House of Commons over an amendment in a Militia Bill. This defeat led to the resignation of the ministry (1852).

On Lord John Russell's resignation, followed by a brief tenure of power by Lord Derby (the Lord Stanley of Peel's ministry), who did not attempt, however, to revive  
Lord Aberdeen's  
Coalition  
ministry,  
1852-5. protection, the Queen persuaded the leaders of the Peelites and of the Whigs to combine in a coalition ministry. Peel had died in 1850, and the Duke of Wellington in 1852, but Peel's followers held the two most important positions in the ministry—*Lord Aberdeen* being Prime Minister, and *Gladstone* Chancellor of the Exchequer. The two chief Whigs, *Lord John Russell* and *Lord Palmerston*, made up their dispute, the one becoming Leader of the House of Commons, and the other Home Secretary, whilst Lord Clarendon was made Foreign Secretary. "England does not love coalitions" was Disraeli's remark upon this ministry, and it lasted but a short time and



accomplished little. Gladstone, however, had time to sweep away the remaining Protective duties, and made Great Britain a purely Free-Trade country. In Foreign affairs the ministry showed itself somewhat weak and hesitating, as a coalition of such diverse elements was perhaps bound to be, and its mismanagement of the Crimean War led to its resignation in 1855 (pp. 659-63).

## 5. The Dictatorship of Lord Palmerston, 1855-65, and the Reform Bill of 1867

For the next ten years (1855-1865) *Lord Palmerston* was the practical dictator of the country. On two occasions, however, he found himself in a minority. He was beaten, in 1857, in the House of Commons because he upheld a high-handed action of our agent in Hong-Kong. He thereupon dissolved Parliament and came back with a considerable majority. On the second occasion, a few months later, in 1858, he was held to have truckled to France. A man called Orsini had tried to murder Napoleon III, the ruler of that country. He had contrived his plot in London, and, in order to prevent the recurrence of such an affair and to soothe French susceptibilities, Palmerston brought in a Conspiracy to Murder Bill, making such a conspiracy a felony punishable by penal servitude for life. The opposition represented this bill as due to French dictation, and the bill was thrown out. Palmerston resigned. Lord Derby formed the second of his administrations, only to make way, after fifteen months of office, for the return of Palmerston in 1859.

*Lord Palmerston's  
ministries, 1855-8  
and 1859-65.*

Apart from Foreign affairs, of which Lord John Russell had control after 1859 (pp. 665-9), there was little of importance to record during these ten years. *Gladstone* had developed into a Liberal, and in 1859 became the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He exhibited great financial skill and still greater powers of oratory in the budgets which he annually produced. After the Crimean War, in which France had been our ally, was over, Great Britain became very apprehensive of Napoleon III's ambitions (p. 664), and the scare of an invasion from France led to the formation, in 1858, of the *Volunteers*, who

*Domestic  
affairs,  
1855-65.*



fifty years later were merged in the Territorial Army. The *Prince Consort* died in 1861. Though never very popular in Great Britain, and though at times his influence over the Queen, especially in Foreign affairs, was somewhat resented and sometimes misunderstood, he had devoted his whole energies to his adopted country, and his death was a great loss. Moreover, the grief of the Queen was inconsolable, and she lived in almost complete retirement for the next ten years.

Lord Palmerston died, "full of years and honour", in 1865, when within two days of his eighty-first birthday. Being an Irish peer, he could sit in the House of Commons, and Career of Lord Palmerston (d. 1865). he was a member of it for nearly sixty years. He had been given a "rotten borough" to represent in 1807, on the quaint condition of its owner that "he should never set foot in the borough", and had remained a member ever since. He had served under ten prime ministers. For nearly fifty years he had been a minister of the Crown, and for a greater portion of the time since 1830 he had been mainly responsible, either as Foreign Secretary or as Prime Minister, for the foreign policy of the country. Lord Palmerston has been described as a thorough English gentleman. He was a good-humoured and good-tempered man, bluff and hearty, loving a political fight, and yet a generous foe. He was an excellent landlord and a keen sportsman, who made of his exercise, as he said, "a religion"<sup>1</sup>. Masterful in council, expert in administration, he possessed all those qualities of common sense, self-confidence, and courage which appealed to his country, and towards the end of his life his supremacy was hardly questioned, even by his political opponents. He has been described, with some truth, as a Conservative at home and a Revolutionist abroad. After 1832 he had little sympathy with further Reform movements in Great Britain, and whilst he was in power no reforms were passed; but his sympathy with Liberal aspirations in countries which did not enjoy the same measure of self-government and liberty as Great Britain was sincere and outspoken (p. 654-658).

After Lord Palmerston's death the further reform of Parlia-

<sup>1</sup> Lord Palmerston riding on his old grey horse was one of the most familiar sights in London, and he thought nothing of riding in the rain to Harrow—his old school—and back when not far short of eighty years of age.



ment could no longer be delayed. The agitation in favour of reform became serious, and a gigantic procession organized by the reformers swept down the railings of Hyde Park when its members were not allowed to pass through the park gates. Lord John Russell, who succeeded Palmerston as Prime Minister, tried to pass a bill, but some of his own party—who were compared by Bright to the discontented refugees in the cave of Adullam, and hence came to be known as “the Adullamites”—attacked the bill so fiercely that Lord John Russell resigned. Lord Derby then formed the third and last of his administrations. The Conservative leaders, and in particular Disraeli, considered that a Reform Bill must be produced, though Lord Derby confessed it was a “leap in the dark”. Consequently Disraeli, in 1867, piloted a new *Reform Bill* through the House of Commons, though he had, as he said, “to educate his own party” as he did so, and though he had to accept many amendments from the opposition leader, Gladstone.

The Reform Bill of 1867.

## 6. General Review of Affairs, 1832–67

On the whole our domestic politics from the fall of Lord Grey in 1834 to the Reform Bill of 1867 were, apart from the struggle for the repeal of the Corn Laws, unexciting. This was partly due to the fact that the programme of the Liberals or Whigs was exhausted, and that they desired organic changes no more than the Conservatives. Moreover, towards the close of the period the attention of Great Britain was increasingly drawn to affairs outside her own shores. First came the revolutionary movements of 1848. Then followed the intrigues and negotiations leading to the Crimean War of 1854. Immediately after the termination of that war came the Indian Mutiny of 1857 (p. 689), which was followed by the war of Italian Unity in 1859. The American Civil War occurred in 1861, and caused the stoppage of the supply of raw cotton from the Southern States, thus causing the most fearful distress in Lancashire, as many of the cotton mills had to be closed. Later on came the Danish question which led to the Austro-Prussian War of 1866 (see Ch. XLVIII, § 3). But, above all, the best energies of the nation were occupied in other directions.

Review of affairs, 1832–67.



The later years of the period were years of wonderful and continuous progress in industries and manufactures, a progress which was illustrated by a great exhibition held in Hyde Park in 1851. In the domain of literature, Tennyson and Browning, Thackeray and Dickens, Carlyle and Ruskin were doing some of their best work. In the domain of science, Darwin was arriving at that theory of natural selection based on the facts of evolution which was to be published to an astonished and at first incredulous world in 1859.

Moreover, both in England and Scotland, ecclesiastical controversies were acute. In England, in 1833, the *High Church* or *Oxford movement* was initiated at Oxford by *Newman* and *Keble*. Its object was not only to make people realize the continuity of the Church of England from the early Christian ages and to revive some of the ceremonies and doctrines of the early and middle ages, but also to bring the Church more in touch with the needs of the time. The opponents of the High Church party, the Broad Church and Low Church parties, maintained that the opinions of the more extreme, at all events, of the High Church party were contrary to the doctrines of the Church of England as settled at the Reformation, and approximated to those of the Church of Rome.

The High Church movement.

Colour was lent to this charge by the fact that Newman seceded to Rome in 1845 (eventually becoming a cardinal), and that his example was followed by many others. These ecclesiastical controversies occupied much public attention, especially between 1840 and 1865. They were of considerable benefit to the Church of England, as they provoked keenness and energy, and ever since the activities of that Church have been manifold and productive.

In Scotland, also, there was, during these years, a great religious movement. As has been explained in an earlier chapter (see p. 458), Presbyterianism had, after the revolution of 1688, been established as the State religion of Scotland. But considerable dissensions had at various times arisen, more especially as to the system in Scotland whereby ministers were appointed by individual lay patrons. It was held by a great many that the appointment of ministers should rest, not with any individual, but with each separate con-

The Disruption of 1843 in Scotland.



gregation or their representatives, and at all events that the latter should possess a veto on any appointment. The matter came up before Parliament, but the Government would not recognize the right of veto. Consequently in 1843 came the famous Disruption in the Scottish Church, and a large number of people, headed by *Dr. Chalmers*, founded a new organization called the *Free Church of Scotland*. Some sixty years later, in 1900, the great majority of the members of the Free Church amalgamated with the United Presbyterian Church, the other chief dissident from the State Church, and formed "the United Free Church", though a minority declined to unite and remained a separate organization. Eventually, after years of negotiation and preparation, and the passing of several Parliamentary measures designed to remove State interference in the affairs of the Church of Scotland without disestablishing it, the Church of Scotland and the United Free Church of Scotland were reunited in 1929 as *The Church of Scotland*.

## XLVI. Politics and Parties from the Reform Act of 1867 to the outbreak of the World War in 1914.

### 1. From the Reform Act of 1867 to the Home Rule Bill of 1886

We may take as our third period in our survey of politics since 1815 the nineteen years that elapsed between the passing of the second Reform Bill of 1867 and the defeat of the Home Rule Bill of 1886. The Reform Bill of 1867 opened a new era. Under that bill as finally passed, the vote was given to all rate-paying householders and to lodgers who paid £10 a year in rent,<sup>1</sup> whilst in the counties the occupation franchise was lowered to £12. Henceforth the artisan in the town became the arbiter in

<sup>1</sup> Provided that they had occupied the lodgings for twelve months.



politics, and the parties had to adapt themselves to their new master. The Whigs became definitely Liberals, and the Radical element grew increasingly stronger in their councils. The more enterprising of the Conservatives called themselves Tory-Democrats, and wooed the working man with words as honeyed as those of their opponents, and promises hardly less lavish. Moreover, by this time the old leaders had disappeared. Lord Palmerston, as we have seen, died in 1865. Lord John Russell retired from public life after his defeat in 1866, and Lord Derby after the passing of the Reform Bill in 1867. Lord George Bentinck had died in 1848, Sir Robert Peel in 1850, the Duke of Wellington in 1852, and Lord Aberdeen in 1860. The way was thus left open for two men, Benjamin Disraeli and William Ewart Gladstone.

Seldom in English history have two great statesmen living in the same age been so different as *Gladstone* and *Disraeli*. Gladstone was of good Scottish descent, and had enjoyed an education at Eton and Oxford. He made his reputation originally by a book in which he advocated High Church principles with regard to Church and State, and began his political career when barely twenty-three, being given a "pocket borough" which belonged to a Tory of the most extreme type. Subsequently, as we have seen, after being for a short time a member of Peel's Conservative ministry, he had become a Peelite when the Corn Laws were abolished. He then slowly developed into a Liberal, and the budget speeches which he made as Chancellor of the Exchequer, first in Aberdeen's and then in Palmerston's ministry, are still famous.

Disraeli, whose grandfather was an Italian Jew and father a distinguished literary man, left school at fifteen and went to a solicitor's office at seventeen. His first novel, *Vivian Grey*, written in 1826 when he was only twenty-one years of age, brought him into prominence in London society, as did also the length of his ringlets, the quantity of his rings, and the extravagant taste of his waistcoats.<sup>1</sup> He tried four times to get into Parliament before he eventually succeeded in 1837, and he was

<sup>1</sup> A lady who met him at a dinner party when he was a young man describes him as wearing a black velvet coat lined with satin, purple trousers with a gold band running down the outside seam, a scarlet waistcoat, and white gloves with several brilliant rings outside them!



laughed down when he made his maiden speech in the House of Commons.<sup>1</sup> His great chance for distinction had come over the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846. He was the brain of the Protectionists, and, though distrusted at first by some of his own party, he had shown conspicuous capacity in the long periods of Conservative opposition between 1846 and 1866.

The great duel between Disraeli and Gladstone absorbed political interest for the next few years, the former being, by the irony of history, the leader of the great aristocratic party in the State, and the latter of the more advanced Liberals. Both men had the gift, at all events in their later years, of arousing the enthusiasm and devotion of their respective supporters, and also, it must be added, of provoking the lively distrust of their respective opponents. Both were men of exceptional ability, who shone in spheres outside politics. Disraeli was a writer of romances, and perhaps the most successful of all writers of political novels, such as *Coningsby* and *Sybil*. Gladstone's variety of tastes and interests was extraordinary, and made him an omnivorous reader, a productive writer, and the best talker in London, so it was said, after Thomas Carlyle. Intense conviction, great courage, a noble voice and delivery, and a wonderful flow of language, combined to make Gladstone an orator who had no equals for the effect that he could produce on his hearers. Moreover, he was a statesman with almost superhuman powers of work and capacity for detail. Disraeli was a great coiner of telling phrases, and his speeches had an epigrammatic flavour which delighted his hearers, whilst he excelled in satire. He was a man of imagination, who could see further into the future than any of his party, and his predictions were often strikingly verified. "If men were attracted", wrote a distinguished historian, "to Gladstone by what he said, they were fascinated by an attempt to ascertain what Disraeli thought." The British people never quite understood Disraeli; he was the "mystery-man", as a Bishop called him, of British politics, and this mysteriousness undoubtedly increased his power.

On Lord Derby's resignation at the beginning of 1868, Disraeli became Prime Minister. A general election was held in that

<sup>1</sup> It was then that he made his famous remark: "I will sit down now, but the time will come when you will hear me."



year. Contrary to Disraeli's expectation, a great many of the new voters under the Reform Bill of 1867 were on the Liberal side. Consequently the Liberals got a majority in the House of Commons, and before the end of the year Disraeli had resigned.

Disraeli's  
ministry,  
1868.

The new Ministry, under the leadership of *Gladstone*, held office for just over five years (1868-1874). It included *Lowe* as Chancellor of the Exchequer—a brilliant but indis-

Gladstone's  
first ministry,  
1868-74.

cret statesman who had been the leader of the *Adullamites*—and *Cardwell* as Secretary for War. *Bright*, the leader of the advanced section, was at the Board of Trade, but he resigned in 1870. *Lord Clarendon* was Foreign Secretary till his death in 1870, when *Lord Granville*, who throughout led the Liberals in the House of Lords, succeeded him. Gladstone boasted with truth that this administration was not an idle one; indeed it made changes more important than any since that of Lord Grey in 1830. An Act was passed making education compulsory, and establishing school boards where necessary (p. 597). Religious tests were abolished for the holders of fellowships and scholarships at the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Trade unions were legalized (p. 602). Under the Ballot Act, secret voting was established at the election of members of Parliament.

Meanwhile *Cardwell* revolutionized the system of the British army. The purchase of officers' commissions was abolished. The system of short service was established; the normal engagement henceforward was for twelve years, men serving "with the colours" for three to eight years, according to the arm, and then passing into the reserve for four to nine years. This ensured that our army should be composed of young men, and that the country in time of need should have a large reserve. Finally, the linked battalion method was adopted, under which one battalion of a regiment was abroad and the other, nominally of equal strength, was in Britain. Ireland, however, obtained by far the largest share of Gladstone's attention, the Irish Church Act and the first Land Act being passed at this time (p. 646).

"The accomplishment of reforms", it has been said, "invariably reduces the ranks of the reformers." The more timid thought

Cardwell's  
army  
reform.



such incessant legislative activity as Gladstone's Government displayed disturbing and wanted repose. The Government's bark frightened the more moderate, whilst its bite, partially muzzled as it was by the House of Lords and the old Whig contingent in the cabinet, was not severe enough to satisfy the more extreme elements in the Liberal party. In particular the Nonconformist section was displeased with the religious settlement in the Elementary Education Act. Minor proposals had again alienated popular sympathies.<sup>1</sup> The foreign policy of the Government, especially under Lord Granville, had been somewhat dilatory and unenterprising. Our mediation in the Franco-German war of 1870, our policy towards Russia when she repudiated the treaty which she had made after the Crimean War, and our negotiations with the United States of America over the "Alabama" claims had been, if discreet, decidedly unadventurous (pp. 666 and 667-669).

Government becomes unpopular.

The Conservatives had, in Disraeli, a leader who took full advantage of these elements of dissatisfaction. He said of Gladstone's Irish administration that "he legalized confiscation, consecrated sacrilege, and condoned high treason". He compared the occupants of the treasury bench (upon which members of the Government sat) to a "range of exhausted volcanoes", and epitomized their policy as one of "plundering and blundering". He exhorted the country to realize the greatness of its imperial destinies, and summed up the Conservative policy "as being the maintenance of our institutions, the preservation of our empire, and the improvement of the condition of the people".

In 1874 a Cabinet disagreement induced Gladstone quite suddenly, and to the surprise even of some of his own colleagues in the ministry, to dissolve Parliament. In the election which followed the Conservatives were triumphant. Gladstone resigned, and Disraeli came into office with a majority of fifty over Liberals and Irish combined. For the first time since Peel's ministry the Conservatives were really in power as well as in office. They had a majority large enough to prevent accidents in a division, but not large enough to en-

Disraeli's ministry, 1874-80.

<sup>1</sup> For instance, a proposed tax on matches had led to a protest and a procession from the match-workers of East London, who asserted that they would be thrown out of work, and a Licensing Bill of the Government, it was said, "would rob the poor man of his beer".



courage independence on the part of individual members. They had in *Disraeli*<sup>1</sup> a leader of great brilliance, and one who succeeded in obtaining the confidence of the Crown to a greater degree than any other Prime Minister except Melbourne.<sup>2</sup> They possessed competent ministers with *Lord Derby* (son of the former Prime Minister) as Foreign Secretary, *Lord Salisbury* as Secretary for India, *Cross*, who knew a great deal about local administration, as Home Secretary, and *Sir Stafford Northcote* as Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Moreover, the opposition was weak and divided. Gladstone retired in 1875 into private life, to make occasional reappearances that were somewhat embarrassing to the leader who succeeded him, *Lord Hartington*, afterwards *Duke of Devonshire*; and there were frequent disagreements between the Whigs, whom the latter represented, and the Radicals, amongst whom *Joseph Chamberlain* was the most forceful personality. The Conservatives, however, found great difficulty in the conduct of business in Parliament, owing to the obstructive tactics which were developed by the Irish party. The aim of the Irish was to concentrate attention on the Irish question and the demand for Home Rule by obstructing all business which was not of an Irish character. An endless amount of time was scientifically wasted in discussions about nothing in particular, and one Irish member spoke no less than five hundred times in one session.<sup>3</sup>

Nevertheless, the Conservative Government redeemed its pledges with regard to the improvement in the condition of the people. It passed in 1875, for instance, two important Acts. One, the Combination Act of 1875 (p. 602), was described by a Labour leader of the day as the Charter of the Industrial Freedom of the working classes. The other, the Public Health Act of 1875, was the great Charter of Public Health, and formed a great landmark, also, in the progress of modern preventive medicine. Then

<sup>1</sup> In 1876 Disraeli became Earl of Beaconsfield and went to the House of Lords.

<sup>2</sup> Comparing his attitude towards Queen Victoria with Gladstone's, Disraeli once said, "Gladstone treats the queen like a public department; I treat her like a woman". The queen spoke of Disraeli, after his death, as her "dear, great friend".

<sup>3</sup> The tactics of the Irish party have been humorously summarized by a member of it as being:—1. To work in Government time. 2. To aid anybody to spend Government time. 3. Whenever you see a bill, block it. 4. Whenever you see a raw, rub it.



came the Merchant Shipping Act of 1876, which gave to the Board of Trade stringent powers of inspection of ships, and which may be regarded as the charter for the safety of sailors in mercantile vessels. Moreover, the Artisans' Dwellings Act allowed Local Authorities to pull down unhealthy slums and replace them by new buildings. But the chief interest of Disraeli's ministry arose from its conduct of foreign and imperial affairs. In Africa and in India events of importance took place. With 1876 public attention was absorbed by affairs in the near East. "*The Bulgarian atrocities*" perpetrated by the Turks drew Gladstone from his retirement, whilst the *Treaty of Berlin* of 1878, a treaty securing, as many thought, in Disraeli's phrase, "peace with honour", won much popular support (pp. 669-670).

Policy of Disraeli's Government.

Two years after the Treaty of Berlin, in 1880, Lord Beaconsfield, having been in office for six and a half years, appealed to the country at a general election, and was decisively beaten. The causes of his defeat were many. If Gladstone's imperial policy had been too supine, that of Beaconsfield had been too adventurous. Moreover, the Liberals were more scientifically organized in the constituencies. Some bad harvests and the depression of trade told against the party that was in power. The "swing of the pendulum", or, as Lord Salisbury once called it, "the great law of the pendulum", was another element adverse to the Conservatives. But, above all else, Gladstone's re-entry into politics had filled the Liberals with enthusiasm. Though over seventy years of age, he showed most amazing energy in his famous campaigns, especially in his own constituency, Midlothian. Wherever he went, his personality commanded victory; and when the elections came, the Liberals had converted a minority of 50 into a majority over the Conservatives of 166 if the Irish Nationalist members were included in it, and into a majority of 106 if they were not.

Causes of Beaconsfield's fall, 1880.

On Lord Beaconsfield's resignation, the Queen sent for Lord Hartington, nominally the Liberal leader, to form a ministry; but it was clear that no one but Gladstone could now lead the party, so Lord Hartington refused. Gladstone was then summoned, and formed his *second* administration. During the next five years a succession

Gladstone's second ministry, 1880-5, and its difficulties.



of difficult crises arose, of which Gladstone's Ministry had to attempt a solution. Ireland, as usual, occupied a large share of the public attention (pp. 646-7). The obstructive tactics of Parnell—the Irish Nationalist leader—and his followers in the House of Commons necessitated fresh rules of procedure, whilst the agrarian outrages in Ireland required new measures of coercion; and in 1882 came the tragic murder of Lord Frederick Cavendish, the Irish Secretary, in Phoenix Park, near Dublin. In South Africa there came the British disaster at Majuba in 1881 (p. 708). In West Africa, the "grab" for territory began in 1884 (p. 681). In Egypt came the bombardment of Alexandria in 1882, and the death of Gordon at Khartoum in 1885 (p. 675). In India, the movements of the Russians against Afghanistan almost brought about a war in 1884 (p. 694). In the midst of all these difficulties the legislative output of the Government was not considerable. Gladstone, however, passed in 1881 a second *Irish Land Act* (p. 647); and, through an understanding with the Opposition, brought about by the Queen, passed the *Reform Bill* of 1884, which gave the vote to the agricultural and unskilled labourers and rearranged the constituencies (p. 611).

During these troublous years Gladstone's own cabinet was not harmonious. Of the old type of Whig Liberal, *Lord Hartington* was at the India Office, and *Lord Granville* at the Foreign Office. The more advanced or Radical sections in the party were represented by *John Bright* and *Joseph Chamberlain*. The Speaker, however, expressed the opinion that it would be a difficult team to drive, and so it proved. The old Whigs and the new Radicals contained elements too diverse for a satisfactory combination. The former, like political boa constrictors, as someone said of Lord Hartington, had to swallow instalment after instalment of the diet provided by the latter. Threats of resignation were plentiful; it is said, indeed, that within a period of one month nine of the cabinet, for one reason or another, contemplated resignation, and three, including John Bright, actually did resign. Moreover, though the official opposition, under Sir Stafford Northcote (Lord Beaconsfield died in 1881), was somewhat feeble in its criticism, a small group of four independent Conservatives, calling themselves the "Fourth Party" (the Irish Party was the third party), of whom Lord Randolph Churchill and



Lord Balfour afterwards became the most famous, made pungent and unceasing attacks upon the policy pursued by the Government.

Finally, in 1885, Gladstone was beaten on a small point in the House of Commons, and resigned. He was succeeded by the *Marquess of Salisbury*, who was in power, however, for only a short time, as, in the general election which ensued in 1886, Gladstone was again successful, and formed his third administration. But Ireland was to be Gladstone's undoing. He had gradually come to the conviction that the only solution of the Irish question lay in allowing the Irish to have *Home Rule*—a Parliament of their own, subject to the Imperial supremacy in such matters as customs duties, the army and navy, and foreign policy. Consequently he produced the Home Rule Bill, with a result that was disastrous to his own party. Many of his chief supporters deserted him, including Lord Hartington, Chamberlain, and Bright. Opponents of Home Rule feared that under it the Protestant and progressive people that lived in the north of Ireland and the Protestant loyalist minority that lived in the south would be sacrificed to the Roman Catholics, and that Home Rule for Ireland was but a stepping-stone to complete separation. As a consequence the bill was thrown out in the House of Commons, amidst great excitement, by a majority of 30 votes. Gladstone, on appealing to the country, was beaten, and Lord Salisbury returned to office.

Lord Salisbury,  
1885-6;  
Gladstone, 1886,  
and the Home  
Rule Bill.

## 2. 1886-1914, Politics and Parties before the World War

The next period in our review of domestic politics is from 1886 to 1914.

First of all, a word must be said as to the fortunes of parties. The Home Rule movement shattered for a time the Liberal party. It is true that they returned to power in 1892. Gladstone had continued to lead the party, and formed his fourth administration in that year. But he retired from office in 1894, soon after the House of

The disruption of  
the Liberal party;  
Liberals in power,  
1892-5.



Lords had thrown out his second Home Rule Bill. Lord Rosebery became Prime Minister, but resigned office, after a defeat in the House of Commons, in 1895. It was in his Ministry that the modern Death Duties (p. 762), graduated according to the value of the estate, were introduced, though the Prime Minister himself was not in favour of them. Dissensions in the party subsequently led to the retirement of Lord Rosebery from the leadership, and Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman succeeded. The South African War of 1899 (p. 711) still further increased the disagreements of the party; and not till the war was over did a real revival of Liberal fortunes take place.

Meantime, the opponents of Home Rule—who called themselves Unionists—consisted of three elements: there were the

Development of  
Unionist party.

Conservatives under Lord Salisbury, the Whigs under Lord Hartington (who became Duke of Devonshire in 1891), and a Radical section under Joseph Chamberlain, the last two elements calling themselves Liberal-Unionists. At first there was only an informal co-operation between Conservatives and Liberal-Unionists, and the latter refused to join the former in office. Consequently *Lord Salisbury's administration*

Lord Salisbury,  
1886-92.

of 1886 was, at its formation, purely Conservative; it included Lord Randolph Churchill, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, and Arthur Balfour. But Lord Randolph Churchill, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Leader of the House of Commons, who had an immense hold upon the country, in consequence of the vigour of his oratory and his ideals of social reform, suddenly resigned, in 1887, because he disapproved of the additional expenditure proposed for the army and navy. His place as Chancellor of the Exchequer was then taken by Goschen, a Liberal-Unionist of great ability. The chief features of this Ministry were the passing of the County Councils Act (p. 643), the long negotiations over the partition of Africa (p. 680), and the firm and successful administration of Arthur Balfour in Ireland (p. 647).

Lord Salisbury remained in office till 1892, and was then succeeded, as we have seen, by Gladstone. But

Lord Salisbury,  
1895-1902;  
Balfour, 1902-5.

he became Prime Minister for the third time in 1895. The alliance of the Unionist elements now became a coalition. A strong administration was formed



which included Arthur Balfour and Sir M. Hicks-Beach, the Duke of Devonshire, Joseph Chamberlain, and Goschen. The chief features in this Ministry were the Workmen's Compensation Act (p. 597), the Colonial administration of Joseph Chamberlain (p. 641), and the South African War (p. 711). On Lord Salisbury's retirement in 1902, *Arthur Balfour*, Lord Salisbury's nephew, became Prime Minister. It was Balfour's Ministry which passed the Education Act of 1902 (p. 597), and made the Entente with France in 1904 (pp. 678, 720), and the Treaty with Japan in 1905 (p. 720). But meanwhile came a crisis over the old question of Free Trade and Protection. In 1903 *Joseph Chamberlain* proposed a policy of *Tariff Reform*, with the object, at one and the same time, of encouraging home manufactures and of drawing our Imperial ties closer through a system of preferential tariffs within the Empire. These proposals broke up the Unionist party; Chamberlain left office in order to advocate his policy with greater freedom, whilst the Duke of Devonshire and others resigned because Balfour sympathized with that policy. The dissensions in the Unionist ranks and the opposition to Tariff Reform combined with other causes to lead to an overwhelming victory for the Liberals in 1906, and the long Unionist rule came to an end.

Lord Salisbury retired from politics in 1902, and Joseph Chamberlain, in consequence of illness, in 1906. Two great figures of the later Victorian Age were thus lost to public life. *Lord Salisbury*, when Lord Robert Cecil, had entered the House of Commons in 1854, at the age of 24, as member for Stamford,<sup>1</sup> and he used to say that during his years in the House (1854-1868) he was an Ishmaelite—his hand against every man's and every man's hand against him. Lord Robert soon made his mark by the vigour and pungency with which he expressed his independence of view; and he wrote also many political articles, outstanding for their lucidity and literary quality, in the *Quarterly Review*. Then in 1868 he succeeded his father as Lord Salisbury and entered the House of Lords. In 1874, in Disraeli's Government, he became Secretary of State for India. In 1878, at the

<sup>1</sup> Curiously enough, Lord Salisbury's great ancestor Lord Burleigh, Queen Elizabeth's minister, had entered the House also as member for Stamford when he was 27 years old; and whilst Lord Burleigh did over half a century of public service, Lord Salisbury was in public life for forty-eight years.



crisis of the near Eastern question (p. 669), he became Foreign Secretary. His handling of the situation was masterly, and a "circular note" he wrote to the European Powers on the crisis achieved for him a European reputation.<sup>1</sup> He was Prime Minister for a very brief space in 1885 and then from 1886 to 1892 and from 1895 to 1902, occupying also for nearly the whole of this time the post of Foreign Secretary as well. Perhaps Great Britain never held greater authority in Europe than during his tenure of the Foreign Secretaryship. Moreover, the settlement without bloodshed of the different claims and ambitions of the European States in the partition of Africa was largely due to his appreciation of his rivals' requirements as well as of those of his own nation (p. 680). Like other British statesmen, he had many interests besides politics. He was interested in farming and rural housing; he was keen on scientific matters<sup>2</sup> and had a laboratory of his own; and he was a great reader of history and theology.<sup>3</sup>

*Joseph Chamberlain* left school at the age of sixteen to go into business. Then, at the age of eighteen, he went to Birmingham to help to manage a screw factory, and retired Joseph Chamberlain. twenty years later with a substantial fortune. It was in Municipal affairs that he first made his reputation. From 1873 to 1876 he was Mayor of Birmingham—he made it a model city which other cities were glad to imitate. On behalf of the city he bought up and got control of the gas and water supplies; he cleared slums and built artisans' houses; he supplied for the citizens an Art Gallery, a Free Library, and a new park; and some years later he founded the University of Birmingham. Then in 1876, at the age of forty, he entered the House of Commons as one of the members for Birmingham. He quickly made his mark, and in 1881 became President of the Local Government Board, though looked upon at first in Whig circles—and

<sup>1</sup> On the evening after his appointment he sat down at 11 o'clock in his study, which had double padded doors so that no one should disturb him, and by 3 a.m. had composed the Circular Note—one of the historical State papers of the English language.

<sup>2</sup> His was the second—if not the first—private house to be installed with electric light. It was in the year 1881, and Lord Salisbury supervised the whole affair. Power was taken from a sawmill about a mile and a half from the house—needless to say bedroom candles had not infrequently to be requisitioned in the early stages of the experiments when the light failed and the rooms at Hatfield were plunged in complete darkness.

<sup>3</sup> But though very much interested in theology and a sincere Christian, he found, when Prime Minister, that the making of bishops was a great trouble and anxiety. "I declare," he said on one occasion, "they die to spite me!"



even by the Crown—as a somewhat dangerous Radical and even revolutionary! Then, as we have seen, he became, when Gladstone produced his Home Rule Bill, a Unionist. In 1895 he entered Lord Salisbury's Government as Secretary of State for the Colonies and remained in office till 1903. During these eight years he did a great deal for the Empire, especially in the development of the West Indies and of West Africa, and in organizing the investigation of tropical diseases; and he was the chief person concerned in Great Britain in the passing of the Australian Commonwealth Act. But, of course, his energies were mainly concerned with the disputes which led to the South African War and with the settlement of the country afterwards (p. 711). Towards the end of Lord Salisbury's ministry, he worked for an alliance with Germany and the United States of America. With his clear-cut features, his beautiful voice, his incisive and hard-hitting speeches, his eyeglass, and his orchid, he became the best-known and the most often attacked and defended of British statesmen, and no one was more often caricatured.<sup>1</sup> The closing years of his political life—from 1903 to 1906—were taken up, as we have, seen with his crusade for Tariff Reform. In his last public speech on this subject he quoted words which proved to be prophetic:

✓ “Others I doubt not, if not we,  
 The issue of our toil shall see.”

And in 1932 the son, Neville Chamberlain, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, began the execution of the policy to which the father had devoted the last years of his active life. (See p. 765.)

From 1906 to 1915 the Liberals were in office, under the Prime Ministership for a short time of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, and then from 1908 of Asquith (p. 737). The most significant feature of the new Parliament of 1906 lay in the appearance of the new Labour group of some fifty members (p. 602). The Irish Home Rule Party already formed one section of some eighty members independent of the two great parties in the State, and the growth of another now began. In legislation, the most important measures were the Trade Disputes

Liberals in  
 power,  
 1906-15.

<sup>1</sup> Chamberlain had, in the words of one who was for long his political opponent, a genius for friendship, “and was delightful as a companion, alert, not without a pleasant squeeze of lemon to add savour to the daily dish.”



Act of 1906 (p. 602), the Old Age Pensions Act (p. 761), and the National Insurance Act of 1911 (p. 761). Other features of importance were the reorganization of the Army by Haldane and the introduction of the payment of members of the House of Commons, their salaries being fixed at £400 a year.

During the nine years of Liberal supremacy, three great crises arose. The first was in 1909. The House of Lords had already thrown out some of the Liberal measures, and at the close of this year they rejected the Budget. At once a first-class parliamentary crisis arose. Attempts at compromise between the Liberals and Conservatives were made but failed; and, after two General Elections, the Parliament Bill, containing the Liberal proposals dealing with the House of Lords, was passed through the House of Commons. The House of Lords, then, made considerable amendments, which the House of Commons refused to accept. The King, however, on the advice of his ministers, agreed to create a sufficient number of peers to force, if necessary, the Bill in its original form through the House of Lords. As a consequence, the Bill was finally passed in the House of Lords by a majority of 17. Under the terms of the Parliament

The  
Parliament  
Act, 1911.

Act, the House of Lords is deprived of the power it formerly held of rejecting a Money Bill; and if any other Bill is passed by the House of Commons in three successive sessions, and is rejected by the House of Lords in each of these sessions, it becomes law, notwithstanding its rejection for the third time by the House of Lords, so long as a period of two years has elapsed since the date of the second reading of the Bill in the House of Commons in the first of these sessions.

The second crisis arose over the attempt, under the Parliament Act, to pass the Home Rule Bill. This Bill had passed the House of Commons twice in 1913, and could therefore become law on being passed a third time in 1914. The result was that the Protestant part of Ulster made preparations during these two years to resist Home Rule by armed force if necessary, and Ireland—and indeed England—in the summer of 1914 appeared to be on the brink of civil war.

But then came the third crisis—the World War. In 1907 the Triple Entente was made with France and Russia, and then



came a series of crises in Europe. Finally the murder of the Austrian Heir to the Throne in July, 1914, occasioned the World War (p. 723), and in that cataclysm the Irish question was, for a time, forgotten. And, a year later, the War led to the end of a purely Liberal Government (p. 737).

In the closing years of the nineteenth century, most important developments took place in Local Government. Ever since the Tudors, the local administration had been in the hands of the Justices of the Peace, who were appointed by the Lord-lieutenant of each county, and who were usually selected from the local gentry. To the Justices of the Peace were still left petty criminal business and the licensing of public-houses and inns. But by a succession of laws passed between 1888 and 1894 the control of such matters as highways and bridges, housing and public health, was handed over to popularly elected County, County Borough, Urban and Rural District, and Parish Councils, subject to the supervision of the central authority, the Local Government Board, now called the Board of Health. The tendency of later legislation was to increase the functions of County Councils; the superintendence of education was handed over to them in 1902 (p. 598), and in 1929 the maintenance of the poor fell to their care (p. 600).

Development  
of Local  
Government.

## XLVII. History of Ireland, 1815-1914

Ireland, it will be seen from this brief review, had a large share in the party politics of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Catholic Emancipation question almost broke up the Tory party in 1829, and the Irish famine, the immediate cause of the repeal of the Corn Laws, completely broke it up in 1846. Differences in the cabinet about the Irish question led to the retirement of Lord Grey in 1834, and to the wrecking of the Liberal party in 1886. Home Rule, as we have just seen, almost led to civil war in 1914. Politics at times, as Lord Salisbury once said, have meant Ireland and nothing else. The energies of British statesmen have

Influence of  
Ireland upon  
party politics.



been absorbed in endeavours to find solutions for Irish grievances, or in devising Acts—of which over sixty were passed between 1800 and 1885—for dealing with Irish disorders.

For thirty years after the battle of Waterloo *Daniel O'Connell* was the undisputed leader of the Irish Catholics. As an orator to a mass meeting he was unsurpassed; he could, it *Daniel O'Connell*. was said, convulse an audience with laughter, move it to tears, or rouse it to the most passionate excitement. A humorous, good-natured, hospitable man, he had many elements of nobility, if also of weakness, in his character. His influence was nearly always used in favour of constitutional agitation and against agrarian outrages, and still more against armed rebellion; whilst his loyalty to the Crown was unshaken, and, in Queen Victoria's reign, even enthusiastic.

It may be remembered that Roman Catholics in 1815 were still excluded from sitting in Parliament and from holding various offices. O'Connell's first efforts were directed to getting these disabilities removed. In 1823 he formed, in alliance with the Irish priests, a *Catholic Association*, which had branches in nearly every parish. Through this association the Catholics in Ireland were organized. They began to vote only for Protestants who were in favour of emancipation. Meetings took place all over the country. Finally O'Connell, though a Catholic, stood for County Clare as a candidate for Parliament, and won such enthusiastic support that his opponent finally withdrew from the contest and O'Connell was elected without opposition. O'Connell's election was legal, but being a Catholic he could not take his seat—an absurd situation. Wellington's ministry felt that they must yield, especially as Ireland seemed to be on the verge of Revolution and Civil War. Accordingly the Catholic Emancipation Bill was at last passed in 1829. O'Connell consequently entered Parliament, and took a prominent part in the debates preceding the Reform Bill of 1832.

In Grey's ministry, O'Connell led an agitation against the payment of Tithes by Roman Catholic peasants to the Protestant Church, but in Melbourne's ministry Irish affairs were fairly quiescent (p. 615). Then, with the advent of *Peel* into power in Great Britain, in 1841, O'Connell threw his whole energies into an agitation to secure

The Catholic  
Association,  
1823-9.

O'Connell's  
Repeal  
agitation,  
1841-3.



the Repeal of the Union of 1800. The rule of a government directly dependent upon an Irish Parliament, instead of the rule of a viceroy and a chief secretary dependent upon a British cabinet and a British Parliament, was, after that time, the chief demand of the Irish party. O'Connell addressed monster meetings all over Ireland—it is estimated that there were at least a quarter of a million persons present at one held on the Hill of Tara.<sup>1</sup> The agitation was assuming formidable dimensions—when suddenly Peel struck. Arrangements had been made for O'Connell to address what was designed to be the most gigantic of all meetings. The day before that fixed for the meeting, Peel forbade it by proclamation, after having made elaborate preparations to enforce the prohibition if necessary. O'Connell yielded and countermanded the meeting. Then Peel prosecuted O'Connell for his seditious speeches, and obtained his conviction and imprisonment (1843). Though the judges in the House of Lords subsequently declared the sentence an unjust one, O'Connell's power was broken. He lost touch with the more extreme element, known as the "Young Ireland" party, for having yielded to Peel, and died, a broken man, in 1847.

But meanwhile, before O'Connell died, the *famine of 1846* (p. 621) had come upon a "starving people". The holdings in Ireland were minutely subdivided, and the means of subsistence were at all times but a bare sufficiency.

The famine of 1846 and its results.

The potato blight appeared in North America in 1844 and reached Europe in the following year. The potato was the chief means of subsistence of the Irish peasants, and when the crop was ruined they were face to face with starvation.<sup>2</sup> In 1846 and the succeeding years, many did die of starvation. A very much larger number emigrated to America, and since that time emigration has been constant. Hence a great shrinkage of the population has occurred; the population of Ireland, which was eight millions in 1841, was only a little over four millions at the census of 1926.

<sup>1</sup> No disorder ever occurred at any of these meetings, except that on one occasion the retiring crowd trampled down the stall of an old woman who sold ginger-bread. The meetings generally terminated with enthusiastic cheers for the Queen.

<sup>2</sup> The corn crop, however, did not fail in Ireland, but much of the wheat was exported. It was this that made the Irish so angry, as they felt that the Government ought, in consequence of the famine, to have prohibited the export of corn. The Irish parliament had done this on more than one occasion in the eighteenth century.



The famine was followed in 1848—the year of revolutions—by an armed insurrection of the “Young Ireland” party under a leader called Smith O’Brien, an insurrection which came to an ignominious end through the defeat of its leaders in a cabbage garden. Eleven years later, in 1859, the extremists started, in order to enforce Irish independence, the Fenian Society, a seditious organization, which had for its object the establishment of an Irish republic, and which even tried to invade Canada and to capture the fort at Chester in England.

A new stage was reached in the Irish problem when Gladstone came into office in 1869. His first act was the *Disestablishment of the Irish Protestant Church*. The great mass of the population in Ireland was Roman Catholic; yet the Protestant Church was the “established” one. But now, however, the connection with the State was severed, and some of its endowments were devoted to secular purposes, though the reorganized Protestant Church kept the greater part. Gladstone’s second measure was an attempt to deal with the *Land Question*. The land system in Ireland was quite different from that in England. In Ireland, the landlords were, not infrequently, absentees. The tenants and not the landlords were responsible for the buildings and the gates, and, as a rule, made the improvements. Yet, despite this, the great mass of the tenants—except in Ulster—were merely tenants-at-will, who could be expelled at any time, and they did not receive any compensation for their improvements; on the contrary, it occasionally happened that their rents were raised as a consequence. The *Land Act* of 1870 tried to remedy this state of affairs by making the landlord pay compensation both to outgoing tenants who had made improvements increasing the value of the farm, and to those who were evicted from their holdings for causes other than the non-payment of rent or the refusal of reasonable conditions of tenure.

During the rule of Gladstone’s successor, Disraeli, a new personality appeared in Irish politics. In 1879 Parnell became the leader of the Irish party. His mother was an American, and his father an Irish Protestant squire. Educated in England, he went into Irish politics, and entered Parliament in 1875. A hater of England, he became, by his abilities and the



force of his will, the despotic ruler of the excitable Irish party, though he himself was of a silent disposition, and held aloof from his followers. His policy may be briefly explained. From the Irish in America he collected, by periodical visits, funds to support his party. In Parliament, his object was the passing of Home Rule—the giving of legislative and administrative control of Ireland to Irishmen themselves, without entirely severing the link between Great Britain and Ireland. And he forced the attention of British electors upon this issue by obstructing all business which was not connected with Ireland. In Ireland he made an alliance with the *Land League*. This league had been started in 1871 to agitate for further reforms in the land system, for the Land Act of 1870 was far from satisfying the Irish. It used all forms of intimidation, including the new weapon of the *Boycott*—the refusal to work for, or supply anything to, anyone who opposed the policy of the league or who took the farms of evicted tenants.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, during the worst years, from 1877 to 1880, it “rained outrages”.

Gladstone's ministry of 1880-5 had to meet the full force of the new Irish leader and his tactics. A second *Land Act*, introduced by Gladstone, was passed in 1881. This The Land Act of 1881. gave the Irish tenants “the three F's”: Fixity of Tenure; Free Sale; and Fair Rents, for Land Courts were created to settle it. Even this Act did not satisfy the Irish. Refusals to pay rent were accompanied by violence and intimidation, and Gladstone was forced to pass a most stringent Coercion Act,<sup>2</sup> and finally to imprison for a time Parnell and other chiefs of the party.

In 1886 Gladstone himself, as has been related, became a supporter of Home Rule, but his Home Rule Bill of 1886 did not pass the House of Commons, and a later Bill in 1893 was rejected by the House of Lords Home Rule and Irish legislation, 1886-1914. (pp. 637 and 638). The Unionist Governments of 1886 to 1892—when Arthur Balfour was Irish Secretary—and 1895 to 1905 by firm administration succeeded, despite occasional

<sup>1</sup> The first victim of this policy was a Captain Boycott—hence the name. Parnell summarized the policy to be pursued by saying that if a tenant took a farm from which someone else had been evicted, he was “to be isolated from his kind as if he were a leper of old”.

<sup>2</sup> A Coercion Act may be defined as a statute which applies only to some specified portion of the British Isles, and which suspends ordinary constitutional liberties, arming the police with powers unknown to the ordinary law.



outbreaks, in restoring order in Ireland. They were aided by the fact that the Irish party became hopelessly divided in 1890, when a divorce suit in which Parnell was implicated led to more than half his followers renouncing his leadership; though the party after some years again became united. Meantime many reforms were passed. Railways were encouraged. Popular local government was introduced in 1898. Much was done for Agriculture, and farmers were educated and organized, and encouraged to co-operate. Emigration continued to keep the population within reasonable limits. Above all, the purchase by tenants of their holdings, already encouraged by the State, was enormously facilitated by an Act passed in 1903, under which the State advanced money to tenants and gave a bonus to the landlord for selling his property, and by another, passed in 1909, by which the sale of the land was, under certain conditions, made compulsory. These laws began the process, now completed, of converting the Irish tenant into an Irish proprietor. How the Home Rule Bill, however, almost led to Civil War in 1914 has just been related.

## XLVIII. Great Britain and Europe, 1815-78, and the Near East to 1913

The relations of Great Britain since 1815 with other European States must form the subject of our next chapter. The large share that Great Britain had taken in the overthrow of Napoleon and in the subsequent negotiations at the *Congress of Vienna* (p. 554) had given her a foremost position amongst European powers; and for over fifty years—from 1815 till the Treaty of Berlin in 1878—the attention of British foreign secretaries was absorbed in various crises that arose on the Continent of Europe. In order, therefore, that British policy may be understood, it is necessary briefly to explain the main lines of European political development up till 1878.

There were two movements of supreme importance in the nineteenth century. *First*, there was a movement for *Self-govern-*



ment.. The rulers of many of the States of Europe after 1815 were reactionary and despotic, and distrusted all Liberal aspirations, which they labelled as dangerous and anarchical. In many parts of Europe liberty, in the English sense, was unknown; there was no liberty of speech or of writing; public meetings were forbidden and arbitrary arrests frequent. Only one other European country besides Great Britain had a Parliament—and that was France. The growing desire felt by the people for greater individual freedom and for a greater control of the government led at times, and especially during the years 1830-2 and 1848-52, to agitations and revolutions, which were sometimes suppressed and sometimes successful. Closely allied with the movement for self-government there was, *secondly*, a movement for the realization of the idea of *Nationality*. People of the same race or speaking the same language, possessing common traditions or a common history, showed a passion to be united and to be freed from the control of alien rulers, a passion which led to the independence of Belgium in 1830, to the War of Italian Liberation in 1859, and to the final union of Germany under the leadership of Prussia in 1871.

Self-governing  
and National  
movements  
in Europe.

It was this idea of nationality as well as the oppressiveness of the Turkish Government which caused the frequent revolts of Christians in south-eastern Europe against the Sultan of Turkey, revolts leading to the independence of Greece in 1829, and to the practical independence of the various Balkan States as a result of the Treaty of Berlin in 1878. These revolts are connected with the *third* great subject that after 1815 occupied the attention of European statesmen, the *Eastern Question* as it is called, due to the slow dissolution of the Turkish Empire and the conflicting interests of European nations which resulted.

The Eastern  
Question.

What was the attitude of Great Britain on these subjects? Both persecuted Liberals and oppressed Nationalities looked to her for sympathy and advice, for mediation, and at times even for armed assistance. The people of Great Britain gave their sympathy, and individual Englishmen expended their money and risked their lives in supporting the twin causes of liberty and nationality. The Government

Attitude of  
Great Britain,  
1815-78.



of Great Britain was prolific in advice, and not infrequently very valuable advice; and it sometimes attempted, with success, to combine with other powers in mediating between the combatants. But from 1815 onwards a desire for peace and a horror of European entanglements which might lead to war were the chief characteristics of British statesmen—with the important exception of Lord Palmerston; the policy of the British Government was therefore on the whole pacific, and it shrank, wherever possible, from armed assistance.

On the Eastern Question British opinion was divided, and not always consistent. British sympathies on behalf of the oppressed Christians were counterbalanced by a very lively distrust of Russian political designs in the Balkan peninsula. It was thought that Russia supported these Christians—of whom, as they belonged to the Greek Church, the Czar regarded himself as the natural protector—chiefly in order to attain what was supposed to be the great object of her policy, the acquisition of Constantinople, and with it the control of the Eastern Mediterranean and a road to India. Moreover, the courage of the Turk in warfare aroused the admiration of the British race, and encouraged a belief in the prospective regeneration of the Turks and a hopefulness in the future of their rule.

## 1. A Period of Comparative Peace, 1815-54

We must now turn to the details of the history. *Alexander I*, the Czar of Russia (died 1825), who combined great piety and feelings of universal benevolence with strong ideas of the Divine Right of monarchs, and *Metternich*, a cynical statesman, who controlled the policy of Austria till 1848, were the chief personalities in European politics after 1815. Metternich regarded with hostility all constitutional movements—all agitations having for their object the greater control of the government by the people—and tried to persuade the other European powers to combine in suppressing them in whatever country they might occur—and, from the point of view of the Austrian Empire, he may have been right. For the first seven years (till 1822) Castlereagh remained Foreign Secretary and was a great conciliatory influence in the peaceful settlement

Coercive Policy  
of Czar and  
Metternich,  
1815-23.



of European affairs at various Congresses. But both *Castlereagh* and even more decidedly his successor, *Canning* (Foreign Secretary, 1822-7), were opposed to the policy of European States intervening in each other's internal affairs. Great Britain, however, desired peace above everything else, and her army was so much reduced after the war that she could not take a very strong line. Consequently when the Austrians occupied Naples in 1821, and the French invaded Spain in 1823 in order to preserve the thrones of two worthless despots whose arbitrary government had produced popular insurrections, Great Britain could do nothing effective to stop them.

Canning, however, sent to our old ally, Portugal, first a squadron of ships and then an army of soldiers, and thus prevented that kingdom from falling into the hands of the reactionary and absolutist party. He decided also to recognize the independence of the Spanish colonies in America (Mexico, Peru, and Chili), which had been rebelling against the mother country for some time. "I called in", he said, "the New World to redress the balance of the Old." If French influence was to predominate in Spain, and absolutist principles were to be supreme, it was to be "in Spain without the Indies", as Canning expressed it.

Policy of  
Canning,  
1822-7.

But Canning during his period of office as Foreign Secretary was chiefly occupied with the Eastern Question. The Greeks rose for independence against the Turks in 1821, and a long war ensued. Into the details of the *Greek War of Independence* (1821-9), which "offers", as has been said, "a chequered picture of patriotism and corruption, of desperate valour and weak irresolution", we have no space to enter. The memory of the great achievements of the Greeks in ancient days, and the gratitude felt for their influence upon European civilization, caused opinion in Great Britain to be strongly upon the side of the Greeks, and led to their cause being championed by British sympathizers. Amongst others, Lord Cochrane<sup>1</sup> and Sir Richard Church—the one on

Greek War of  
Independence,  
1821-9.

<sup>1</sup> Cochrane had already won great renown for his brilliant exploits in fighting the Spaniards on behalf of the independence of Chili, and the Portuguese on behalf of that of Brazil. In 1827 he was made admiral of the Greek fleet; but he met with little success—the Greek seamen, in his opinion, "were collectively the greatest cowards" he had ever met with.



sea and the other on land—rendered great services; whilst Lord Byron, the poet, died fighting with the Greek forces. The British Government, however, was faced with a difficult situation. It was not unsympathetic towards the Greeks, but it was very fearful of Russian interference lest a general dissolution of the Turkish Empire should be the result. Eventually, in 1827, after the war had been in progress for some years, and the Sultan had called in the assistance of Mehemet Ali, the formidable ruler of Egypt, Canning was successful in persuading Russia and France to agree with Great Britain in suggesting terms. The Greeks were to have self-government under Turkish suzerainty; and meanwhile an armistice was to be imposed upon the combatants whilst negotiations with this object were in progress.

A combined fleet of the allies, under Sir E. Codrington, had orders to enforce the armistice, and was sent to watch the Turco-Egyptian fleet, which was lying in the *Bay of Navarino*. As the admiral of the Turco-Egyptian fleet proved unwilling to observe the armistice, Codrington decided to make a demonstration, and sailed into the bay. Some shots fired by a Turkish ship led to a general engagement, and in a short time the bay was covered with the wreckage of Turkish and Egyptian ships (October, 1827).<sup>1</sup> The battle of Navarino, by destroying the Sultan's fleet, secured Greek independence. But before it was fought, Canning was dead, and the *Duke of Wellington*, who became prime minister at the beginning of 1828, and who had regarded Canning's policy with distrust, looked upon the battle as an "untoward event";<sup>2</sup> and was opposed to any further measures of coercion against Turkey. Consequently Russia continued operations against Turkey single-handed, and eventually by a treaty in 1829, which was modified three years later, the independence of Greece was recognized by Turkey and by the great powers of Europe, whilst Russia acquired some increase of territory in Asia.

<sup>1</sup> It is said that the Duke of Clarence (afterwards William IV), who was then lord high admiral, wrote privately to Codrington before the battle, "Go in, my dear Ned, and smash these — Turks"; but there is no trace of such a letter, and it is unlikely that the duke, who was somewhat long-winded, would have expressed himself in words of one syllable. There is a tradition in the French service that the French sailors, when opportunity offered, fired during the battle into the Russian ships, to avenge the retreat from Moscow.

<sup>2</sup> It was called this in the "king's speech" at the opening of a new session of parliament.



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✓ The year 1830 is an important one in the history of our foreign policy. In the first place, a series of revolutions and insurrections occurred. The series began during July in France, where *Charles X*, a despotic and reactionary king, who had succeeded Louis XVIII in 1824, was overthrown, and his cousin, *Louis Philippe*, who professed popular principles, was put on the throne. From France the movement spread to Belgium, to Italy, and to various parts of Germany, whilst the Poles revolted against Russia.

The Revolu-  
tions of 1830.

In the second place, *Lord Palmerston* became our Foreign Secretary in 1830. For the next thirty-five years—until his death in 1865—Palmerston was, either as Foreign Secretary or as Prime Minister, the dominating personality in our foreign politics. The only intervals were from 1841-6 when he was out of office, from 1852-5 when he was Home Secretary, and during three other much shorter intervals of a few months each. A few words must be said as to the general principles of Lord Palmerston's policy. First, he was determined to maintain and to extend the influence of Great Britain, and to uphold her honour; and it was the feeling that this was the underlying purpose of his policy which caused his enormous popularity in his own country. Secondly, he wanted, as he said, "to get the affairs of Europe into trim", and he was in sympathy with all movements having for their object the establishment of independent nationalities or of constitutional governments similar to that of Great Britain. Thirdly, with regard to the Eastern Question he was a strong upholder of the integrity of the Turkish dominions, and believed, as he said in 1838, that given ten years of peace, Turkey would develop into a "respectable power", whilst he was highly suspicious as to Russian designs upon that country.

Lord Palmerston's diplomatic methods were decidedly unconventional; the "Palmerstonian style", as it was called, was bluff and somewhat boisterous and truculent, and was perhaps too careless of other nations' susceptibilities. But his activity was incessant. His advice, asked or unasked, was freely tendered to all foreign nations, and sometimes provoked no little irritation; whilst his sympathy with popular and nationalist agitations led to his being regarded as a firebrand by European rulers, and



even at one time by Queen Victoria and the Prince Consort. Lord Palmerston was said to have had a genius for "fluking" at billiards, of which game he was very fond, and his opponents maintained that this was characteristic of his statesmanship as well; but, whether lucky or not, there is no doubt that Palmerston generally got his own way, and was very successful, at all events, from 1830-41 during his first tenure of the Foreign Office.

The earliest opportunity for the display of Palmerston's statesmanship arose in regard to affairs in the *Netherlands*. Belgium had been joined to Holland by the treaty of 1815, but in 1830 the Belgians rose for their independence and demanded separation. The danger lay in the fact that the Belgians could rely on the sympathy of France, and that Belgium might become, though in theory independent, in practice a French province; and hence Great Britain might be again exposed to the danger against which she had struggled so persistently in the eighteenth century. Palmerston, seeing the impossibility of preserving the union of Belgium and Holland, frankly acknowledged the independence of Belgium, and finally, in conjunction with France, forced the Dutch to cease from resisting it; but he took care that *Leopold of Saxe-Coburg*, and not a member of the house of Bourbon, should be made king, and that France herself should obtain no territorial extension, not even, in his own words, "a cabbage garden or a vineyard". The choice of Leopold proved a notable success. He was a person of great sagacity and governed well; whilst, as son-in-law of Louis Philippe and uncle of Queen Victoria, he was able to play a considerable part in European politics.

Palmerston's  
policy, 1830-41;  
Belgium, 1830.

The affairs of *Portugal and Spain* next occupied Palmerston's attention; in each of these countries a young Queen, supported by a party of moderate reform, was opposed to an absolutist uncle supported by the reactionary parties. Palmerston supported the cause of the queens. The Portuguese uncle was easily disposed of, but it was not till 1840 that the Spanish uncle, Don Carlos, was finally evicted.

Spain and  
Portugal.

In the meantime more than one crisis arose over the activities of Mehemet Ali. He was an Albanian who had made himself master of Egypt in 1811. In the Greek War of Independence he had supported his suzerain, the Sultan of Turkey. But in



1831, fearful perhaps of being himself attacked by the Sultan, he sent his son to invade Palestine and Syria, which were in the Turkish Empire. The Turks were defeated in a great battle, and the Sultan was in a desperate position. "A drowning man clings to a serpent for aid," said one of the Sultan's advisers. The Sultan, accordingly, clung to Russia, and, though Mehemet Ali got Syria, Russia allowed him to go no further. In return for the Czar's support, Turkey agreed to make with Russia the Treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi (1833), by which, in effect, Russia was allowed a free passage for her warships through the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, which were to be closed to the warships of every other nation—a Treaty, it has been said, which marked the zenith of Russian influence at Constantinople.

Some years later, in 1839, the Sultan tried to recover Syria, but his army was defeated, and Mehemet Ali was in a position to march upon Constantinople. Palmerston, true to his policy of maintaining the Turkish Empire, supported the Sultan, but Louis Philippe, anxious to win the favour of Mehemet Ali and to extend and develop the influence of France in Egypt, refused to co-operate with Great Britain. Consequently Palmerston turned to Russia, and Great Britain, Russia, Austria, and Prussia formed an alliance to prevent the further progress of Mehemet Ali. Acre was bombarded and taken; Mehemet Ali was driven back, and had to agree to an arrangement by which he was deprived of Syria (1840). But the French people were furious at the matter being settled without their country being consulted. Louis Philippe talked of "unmuzzling the tiger of war", and surrounded Paris with forts, and war was narrowly averted. What was very important for Great Britain was that in the following year, 1841, the Great Powers and the Sultan pledged themselves not to permit "vessels of war belonging to Foreign Powers to enter the Dardanelles or the Bosphorus"—and thus the dangerous Treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi was torn up.

Just at this time, however, Lord Melbourne's government was defeated, and Peel came into power (1841). Lord Palmerston accordingly retired from the Foreign Office. Lord Aberdeen's policy, 1841-6. Lord Aberdeen, his successor, and Guizot, who became Foreign Secretary in France, were both pacifically inclined, and good feeling between the two countries was gradually re-



stored during the next five years. To Lord Aberdeen's credit must also be put an agreement with the United States which settled a difficult and thorny boundary question on the west coast of America, though the agreement was very distasteful to Canada (p. 700).

Lord Palmerston returned to the Foreign Office in 1846, and almost immediately the good understanding with France came to an end over the *Spanish marriages question*. The Queen of Spain and her sister were both unmarried, and the Courts of Europe busied themselves in discussing what husbands should be provided for them. Eventually Louis Philippe arranged that the Queen should marry one of her cousins, who was a contemptible person and in weak health, whilst her sister married Louis Philippe's son; and the marriages took place on the same day (1846). Great Britain was furious, as it was thought that the Queen would have no heirs, and that consequently Louis Philippe would secure the throne of Spain for his own descendants. As a matter of fact the Queen did have children, but the British distrust of Louis Philippe remained incurable.

The Spanish marriages question, 1846.

Louis Philippe, however, was not to reign much longer. The great year of Revolutions came in 1848. France started the movement by deposing Louis Philippe and inaugurating a republic; after ten months of turmoil, Louis Napoleon, the nephew of the great Napoleon, was elected as president for four years. Revolutions, headed by political reformers or ardent nationalists, followed in nearly every country in Europe, but especially in Hungary and Italy, where the people strove to rid themselves of the hated Austrian yoke, and in the different states of Germany. The Emperor of Austria abdicated, and his minister, Metternich, was overthrown; whilst the Emperor who succeeded, Francis Joseph, then a youth of eighteen, was driven from Vienna. The Prince of Prussia had to fly to England, and there was some severe fighting in Italy and Hungary. Lord Palmerston sympathized with these various movements, gave advice in all directions,<sup>1</sup> and actually allowed arms

The Revolutions of 1848.

<sup>1</sup> "Every post", wrote Palmerston, "sends me a lamenting minister throwing himself and his country upon England for help, which I am obliged to tell him we cannot afford."



to be sent indirectly from Woolwich Arsenal to the insurgents who rose in Sicily. Before long, however, the forces of reaction were triumphant. Austria was enabled to preserve her rule in Northern Italy, and, with the aid of the Russians, to crush the Hungarians, whilst the movement in Germany fizzled out.

Meanwhile Lord Palmerston's policy had provoked Queen Victoria's keen dissatisfaction. Moreover, he was inclined to

Fall of Palmerston, 1851.

carry on negotiations with other countries without consulting either the Queen or the Prime Minister.

The Queen quite rightly protested, and when Lord Palmerston, contrary to the wishes of the Queen and the Prime Minister, expressed his approval of a *coup d'état* by which Louis Napoleon had made himself master of France,<sup>1</sup> he was dismissed (1851).

## 2. The Crimean War, 1854-6

In 1854, Eastern complications, so prolific of crises throughout the nineteenth century, produced the first great European

Causes of Crimean War, 1854.

war in which Great Britain had been directly engaged since the great campaign against Napoleon.

In order to understand the causes of this war—the *Crimean War* as it is called—we must try to appreciate the positions of the chief Christian powers engaged in it. First, let us take *Russia*. The Czar, *Nicholas I*, was firmly persuaded of the impending dissolution of the Turkish Empire. He was anxious to come to some arrangement with Great Britain before that event took place, and with that object spoke to our ambassador at St. Petersburg. "We have on our hands a sick man, a very sick man," he said in reference to Turkey; "we ought to agree about the funeral," and he suggested that Great Britain might have Egypt and Crete as her share of the inheritance.

Secondly, there was *Great Britain*. Its Government denied that Turkey was mortally ill, and regarded the Czar, not as the friendly undertaker, but as a person meditating an act of robbery, accompanied by violence, and if necessary by murder. But the British cabinet at that time was the result of a coalition between

<sup>1</sup> Louis Napoleon had the support of the army, and early on the morning of Dec. 2, 1851, he arrested seventy people who were the most likely to oppose his re-election as President, and made himself supreme. A year later he was elected Emperor.



Whigs and Peelites (see p. 624). The views of its members were not harmonious, *Lord Aberdeen*, the Prime Minister, leading a pacific section, and *Lord Palmerston*, who was Home Secretary, a warlike one. As a result its policy was indecisive, vacillating, and indefinite. Moreover, in the crisis of the negotiations preceding the war, both Russia and Great Britain had bellicose agents at Constantinople. *Prince Mentchikoff*, the Russian agent, was determined to promote and extend Russian interests, and *Lord Stratford de Redcliffe*, the British Ambassador, apprehensive and suspicious of Russian designs, was in favour of what he called a "comprehensive war", if necessary, in order to thwart them.

Thirdly, there was *France*, under its new ruler, the Emperor *Napoleon III*, who had succeeded to supreme power in France as a result of the Revolution of 1848 and of his own *coup d'état* three years later. Both as the nephew of Napoleon, and in order to divert the attention of the French from home affairs, he was anxious to achieve military glory, and to make himself the arbiter of Europe. In the troubled Eastern waters he saw his chance, and he seized it.

The Holy Land belonged to the Turkish Empire. A trumpety dispute between the monks of the Roman and Greek Churches about the guardianship "of a key and a star", the key of the holy places at Jerusalem and the star over the altar at Bethlehem, led to the monks being championed respectively by France and Russia, the one regarding itself as protector of the Roman and the other of the Greek Church. The matter was eventually settled, but the Russians, in the course of the negotiations, revived an old claim to the protectorship of the Christian subjects of the Sultan. Mentchikoff continued to press this claim, but the Sultan, on Lord Stratford de Redcliffe's advice, rejected it, as it might have given the Czar a large control over the whole of the Turkish territories in Europe. Complex negotiations followed, but unfortunately the British cabinet never made its position clear to Russia, and consequently the Czar never realized that persistence in his claims was likely to lead to war. Eventually the Russians, in order to coerce Turkey, occupied the Turkish principalities that bordered the Danube, and subsequently destroyed a Turkish squadron at *Sinope* (Nov., 1853). Feeling in



Great Britain was aroused, Louis Napoleon was anxious for war, and eventually the British cabinet drifted into it; an ultimatum was sent to Russia, and on its rejection war was declared (March, 1854). Great Britain, France, and Turkey, joined in the following year by the ruler of Piedmont, the King of Sardinia,<sup>1</sup> were opposed to Russia; Prussia and Austria, after some hesitation, remained neutral.

The war which followed is generally known as the *Crimean War*, because it was in the Crimea that the main military operations took place. The original object of the allies, the  
 The war, 1854.      expulsiion of the Russians from the Danubian principalities, was quickly secured; but it was considered necessary for

future security to cripple Russia, and for that purpose to capture *Sebastopol*, the great Russian arsenal and fort in the Crimea, the "very heart", as it was called, "of Russian power in the East".

"The history of the Crimean War", it has been said, "is a history of blunders." In a sense this is true of all wars, and the combatant who makes the fewer blunders is victorious. But the great powers of Europe had waged no big campaign since that of 1815, and it is undeniable that the art of war had been somewhat forgotten. The allied forces landed in the Crimea, and won the battle of the *Alma* in September, 1854. But the battle, apart from the courage shown by the soldiers, reflected little credit upon the allies.<sup>2</sup> An immediate advance after the battle might have resulted in the capture of *Sebastopol*. But the French commander was mortally ill, and delayed. Consequently the Russians were given time to improve the defences by raising earthworks and by scuttling the fleet in the Bay of *Sebastopol*. The allied commanders, after a dangerous flank march round *Sebastopol*, decided that an immediate assault was impossible, and undertook a regular siege.

The British base of supplies was at *Balaclava*, some six miles from their trenches. A large Russian army which was outside *Sebastopol* determined to seize it, and on the 25th October came

<sup>1</sup> This was due to the King of Sardinia's minister, Cavour; he wished to ingratiate his country with France and Great Britain, so that they might look with sympathy upon Cavour's schemes for the attainment of Italian nationality.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Raglan, the British commander, was on an exposed position within the enemy's lines where he could not control the battle, whilst the bulk of the French forces went astray, and arrived too late to turn the enemy's left wing as was intended.



the battle of *Balaclava*. That battle was famous for three incidents. Early in the day our Turkish allies had been repulsed by the Russians; the way to Balaclava was as a consequence only blocked by one regiment of foot, the 93rd, under Colin Campbell. Some squadrons of Russian cavalry tried to reach Balaclava by getting round the flank of the British line, but Campbell, with great celerity, changed his front, and the Russian cavalry were obliged to retreat. Soon after this, the "Heavy Brigade" of cavalry, though it was outnumbered by three to one, charged the massed squadrons of the Russian cavalry, and in some eight minutes broke through them, and forced them to retreat. Last of all, six hundred men of the "Light Brigade" made, owing to mistaken orders, a magnificent though useless charge down a valley swept by artillery from all sides, and actually managed to reach and temporarily to take possession of the enemy's guns.<sup>1</sup> The British forces, therefore, managed to save Balaclava, but the Russians got command of the only metalled road that ran from Balaclava to the British trenches, and hence made this road useless for the transport of supplies. Less than a fortnight after the attempt on Balaclava, the Russians made a determined attack at *Inkerman* upon the right of the British forces besieging Sebastopol. After a desperate battle, fought in a fog—a "soldiers' battle", if ever there was one—the Russians were eventually repulsed (November 5, 1854).

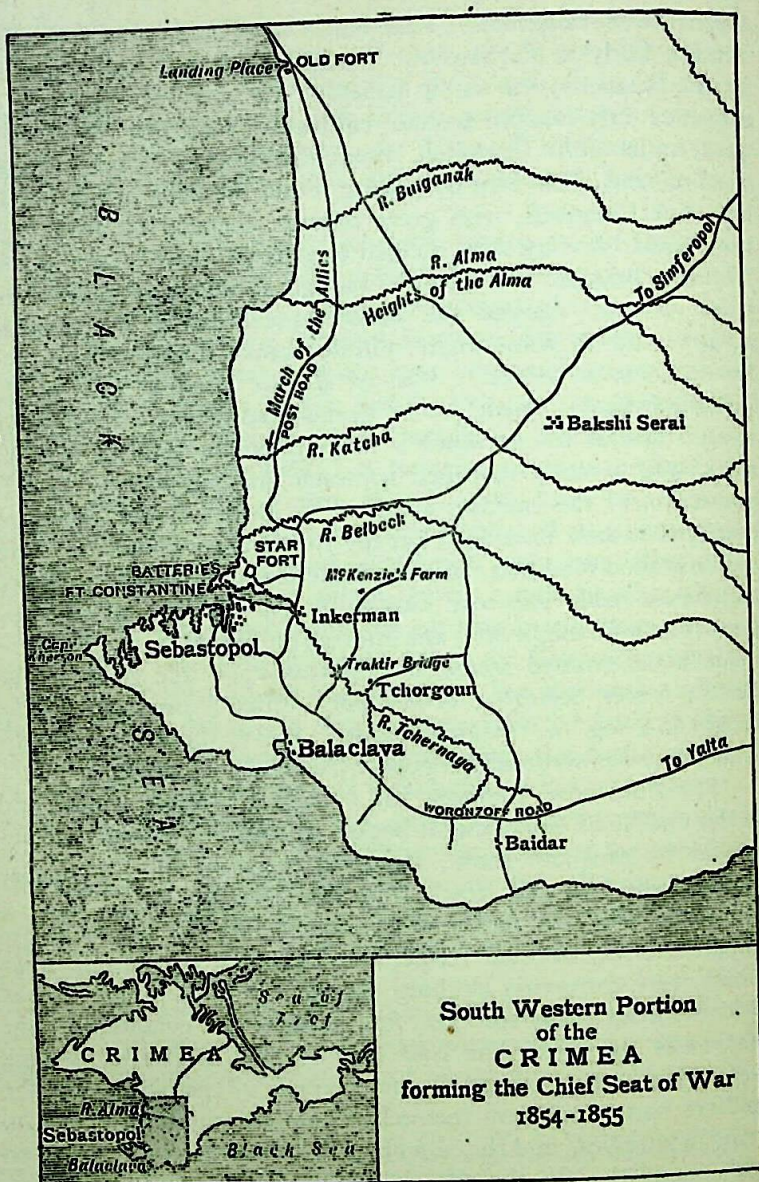
Balaclava and  
Inkerman.

The allies now, however, had to fight a Crimean winter, and in the middle of November it began. A fearful hurricane, accompanied by rain and snow, destroyed many of the tents, made the cart track from the trenches to Balaclava—the only means of communication the British had—impassable for wheeled traffic, and destroyed twenty-one ships which were conveying clothing, forage, and ammunition for the British forces. For the next four months the condition of the army was terrible. The cold was intense; food and clothing were alike scanty; the transport animals all perished, and the soldiers had to convert themselves into commissariat mules to bring in supplies; and the camp hospitals were miserably provided with necessities for the sick and wounded. As a consequence,

The Crimean  
winter.

<sup>1</sup> See Tennyson's Poems. The criticism of the French commander on the charge of the Light Brigade is well known: "C'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas la guerre".







the troops were attacked by cholera and scurvy, by dysentery and fever, and at one time the men in hospital were more numerous than those outside it.

Newspaper correspondents made the condition of the army known at home. The nation was furious, and felt that Lord Palmerston was the only statesman fitted to cope with the situation. Lord Aberdeen accordingly resigned in January, 1855, and Palmerston became Prime Minister. But even before this preparations had been made to improve matters. Men and supplies were sent to the Crimea, whilst Miss Florence Nightingale was allowed to organize the nursing in the hospitals; and with Lord Palmerston's accession to office fresh energy was infused into every department.

The Russian army had fared little better than the British during the winter, and was in no condition to take the offensive. Moreover, in February, 1855, the Czar Nicholas died,<sup>1</sup> and was succeeded by Alexander II. Negotiations for peace were begun, but they came to nothing. The allies then prosecuted the war with vigour. The French had a hundred thousand men, the British forty thousand, and the King of Sardinia some fifteen thousand. With these forces attempts were made to storm Sebastopol; they were at first unsuccessful, but finally, in September, determined attacks were made by the French and British upon two forts which were the keys of the Russian position, the Malakoff and the Redan. The British attack on the latter failed, but the French took the Malakoff, and the same night Sebastopol was abandoned by the Russians (September 8, 1855).

Fall of  
Sebastopol,  
Sept., 1855.

The fall of Sebastopol really ended the war. A congress of European powers was held in Paris at the beginning of 1856, and at the end of March peace was signed. The main terms of peace were these. The integrity of the Ottoman Empire was guaranteed by the powers, though the Sultan promised reforms for his Christian subjects. The Danubian principalities, Wallachia and Moldavia, were made self-governing; in 1861, however, these united under the name of

Treaty of  
Paris, 1856.

<sup>1</sup> The Czar had said, referring to the Crimean winter, that he had two generals on whom he could always rely, *Janvier et Fevrier*. On the Czar's death, in the latter month, a famous cartoon was published in *Punch*, called "General Fevrier turned traitor".



Rumania. The Black Sea was declared neutral, and no ship of war was allowed upon it; nor were arsenals to be built upon its shores.

### 3. British Diplomacy and the Period of Warfare, 1857-71

The Crimean War proved but the prelude to a series of wars all over the world. No sooner was it over than Great Britain had to fight against Persia and China, and to struggle for her power in India, where the Mutiny broke out in 1857. Moreover, her relations with France caused her no little uneasiness, especially in 1858. "We are riding a runaway horse," Palmerston had said of his alliance with Napoleon III, "and must always be on our guard;" and Napoleon III was suspected of designing an invasion of Great Britain and of avenging his uncle's defeats at Trafalgar and Waterloo.

Then in 1859 British diplomacy was occupied with the *War of Italian Liberation*. Since the fall of Napoleon, Italy had been, as during past centuries, merely a "geographical expression". The King of Sardinia and the Emperor of Austria occupied the north; the Pope, the Duke of Tuscany, and three other dukes shared the centre; the King of Naples governed, or rather misgoverned, the south and Sicily. In 1859 the movement for uniting Italy into a nation under Victor Emmanuel, who ruled Piedmont, and was King of Sardinia, could no longer be repressed. But the difficulties were immense: eight states had to be united; the Austrians had to be expelled; and the existence of the Papacy in Italy made the problem of unity a most complex one. The

Italian Liberation War, 1859. Italian patriots, however, were fortunate in their leaders. The discretion of *Victor Emmanuel*, the brain of *Cavour*, his chief minister, and the sword of the hero *Garibaldi* accomplished a United Italy. But, nevertheless, without the assistance of France and Great Britain the movement might not have been successful. Napoleon III with a French army drove the Austrian forces from Lombardy in 1859, though later he forsook the Italian cause, and supported the Pope; whilst the British Government, with Lord Palmerston



as Prime Minister and Lord John Russell as Foreign Secretary, gave the Italians its moral support, and prevented European intervention when Garibaldi with his thousand "Red-Shirts" conquered first Sicily and then Naples in 1860.<sup>1</sup> As a consequence, all Italy was united save Venice and the city of Rome; and these were finally added, the one in 1866, when Austria's energies were occupied in a war with Prussia, and the other in 1870, during the war between France and Germany, when the French troops who had been guarding Rome were withdrawn.

The *American Civil War* (1861-5) followed close on the War of Italian Liberation. This was a war fought between the Northern and Southern States: first as to the right of the Southern States to secede from the Union; and secondly, as to the continuance of slavery, which was still the basis of all labour in the South. The war was fought with great determination on both sides for four years before the North was finally successful.<sup>2</sup> The earlier stages of the war were fought on the question of secession rather than on that of slavery, and the sympathy of the governing classes in Great Britain was inclined to the South, partly because it was the weaker side and partly because of the magnificent fighting powers which it exhibited. The Northern States, moreover, by blockading the Southern ports prevented the export of cotton, which led to terrible distress in Lancashire.

The American  
Civil War,  
1861-5.

The British Government, however, maintained a strict neutrality, though two incidents nearly produced a war with the Northern States. A Northern man-of-war violated British neutrality by taking on the high seas from a British mail steamer—the *Trent*—two agents of the Southern States who were coming to Europe with the object of obtaining European assistance. The British nation was furiously indignant, and its Government sent the Guards to Canada, and penned a dispatch demanding the surrender of the agents and an immediate apology. The Queen, at the suggestion of the Prince Consort—it was his last official act before his death—persuaded the Govern-

The "Trent".

<sup>1</sup> Armed with muskets "fit for the scrap heap", Garibaldi and the thousand took, with the aid of the Sicilian populace, the capital of Sicily from twenty-four thousand regular troops armed with rifles.

<sup>2</sup> The war is reckoned, through battle and disease, to have killed or crippled a million men.



ment to make the wording of the dispatch less peremptory in tone, and to give the Northern States an opportunity of giving way without humiliation, an opportunity of which they fortunately took advantage (1861).<sup>1</sup>

In the other incident the British Government was at fault. A vessel was being built at Birkenhead for use as a cruiser on the side of the South. The British Government was given information about it, but neglected to take steps in time, and consequently the steamer, called the *Alabama*, was able to leave Birkenhead in 1862, and for the next two years played havoc with the merchant ships of the Northern States.<sup>2</sup> The States demanded compensation, and eventually, after long and critical negotiations, the matter was finally ended in 1872 by Great Britain paying over three million pounds.

Whilst the American Civil War was still raging, a new personality in European affairs had arisen in *Bismarck*. Since 1815 the policy of Prussia had lacked initiative and courage, and Lord Palmerston once spoke of her as a *quantité négligeable*. But Palmerston was to be rudely undeceived when Bismarck became the chief minister of the King of Prussia in 1862. His policy was one of "blood and iron"—he knew exactly what he wanted, and was determined to spare no force in order to secure it. Lord Palmerston, now nearing eighty years of age, with a pacific court, a lukewarm and occasionally hostile cabinet, and an army which was small, and not, since the Crimean War, considered to be of great efficiency, was no match for such a resolute diplomatist. Thus, in 1863, British sympathy was aroused in behalf of the *Poles*, who, owing to Russian misgovernment, had risen in insurrection. The British Government dispatched three protests against the cruelty of the Russians in dealing with the rising, whilst Bismarck, afraid lest a successful rising in Russian Poland might be followed by a similar

The  
"Alabama".  
Bismarck and  
the Polish  
Question, 1863.

<sup>1</sup> But American feeling was still sore on the point. Cf. the American poet's lines—

We give the critturs back, John,  
'Cos Abram thought 'twas right;  
It warn't your bullyin' clack, John,  
Provoking us to fight.

<sup>2</sup> The British Government on July 29 finally decided to seize the vessel; but at day-break that morning the *Alabama* left the Mersey, ostensibly on a trial trip, with ladies and other guests on board. The guests were landed in Wales, and the ship took in her armament and her captain and a fresh crew off the Azores, and hoisted the Southern flag.



movement in Prussian Poland, concentrated three army corps on the western frontier of Prussia, ready to help Russia if occasion arose. It is needless to say, therefore, that British protests were unavailing, and the insurrection in Poland was stamped out with merciless ferocity. British intervention had merely irritated Russia without mitigating the lot of the Poles.

In another and more important affair Bismarck triumphed. In 1863 the *Schleswig-Holstein Question* became acute. Palmerston is reported to have said that there were only three people in Europe who ever understood it: the Prince Consort who was dead, a Danish statesman who was mad, and he himself who had forgotten it.

The  
Schleswig-  
Holstein-  
Question,  
1863-4.

An attempt to explain it would therefore be difficult. It is sufficient to remember that for four centuries the kingdom of Denmark and these two Duchies had been ruled by the same sovereign, but that Holstein was also part of Germany, and belonged in the nineteenth century to the German Confederation. An attempt made by the King of Denmark to draw the ties between Denmark and Schleswig closer produced protests from the two chief German states—Austria and Prussia—and, on their proving unavailing, an Austro-Prussian army proceeded to occupy Holstein. British sympathies were strongly with Denmark, which was regarded as a small state bullied by two large ones. An indiscreet speech of Lord Palmerston's led the Danes to suppose that Great Britain would support them by force if necessary, a delusion sedulously fostered by Bismarck, who was anxious that Denmark should go to war, in order that she might be deprived of the Duchies. Denmark was therefore encouraged to resist the demands made on her. An army of Austrians and Prussians accordingly overran both Duchies, and, as no help came from Great Britain, Denmark had not only to surrender them, but to pay an indemnity for having attempted their defence (1864).

Soon after this, in 1865, Lord Palmerston died. The foreign policy of his ministry towards the close of his life was described by the opposition as a policy of "meddle and muddle", and of "senseless and spiritless menaces". Yet it must be remembered that Lord Palmerston had been one of the creators of the kingdoms of Belgium and Italy; and that he had carried Great Britain successfully through the later stages of the Crimean War. In his



old age he met in Bismarck a rival with a freer hand and with a larger and better equipped army—and he was worsted.

The five years following Lord Palmerston's death (1865-71) saw the establishment of Prussian predominance in Europe.

The Austro-Prussian  
Seven Weeks'  
War (1866).

The great object of Bismarck's policy was to drive Austria out of Germany and make Prussia the leading power there: He accordingly brought on a war with Austria in 1866; the battle of *Sadowa* was decisive, and in seven weeks the war came to an end, Prussia gaining as a result the Duchies of Schleswig-Holstein and the kingdom of Hanover,<sup>1</sup> and displacing Austria as the chief power in Germany.

Prussia's success was regarded with great apprehension by Napoleon III, whilst Bismarck saw that the unity of Germany

Franco-German  
War, 1870-1.

could only be achieved by a successful war against her old enemy, France. Consequently, war between France and Prussia was probably inevitable. And in 1870 differences between France and Prussia relative to a candidate for the throne of Spain were dexterously utilized by Bismarck to bring on a war, but in such a way that France appeared to be the aggressor. In this war Prussia, supported by the other German States, including those in the south, was brilliantly successful. Within a month of its opening, Napoleon III and a large army were captured at *Sedan*; and this was followed by the surrender of *Metz* and the siege of Paris. From these disasters France could not recover, and in 1871 she had to agree to a peace by which she paid an enormous indemnity, and lost Alsace and Lorraine.

The Franco-German War had other results. In France it led to the creation of a Republic, which has survived ever since. In Germany, the various states were federated under the leadership of Prussia, whose king became German Emperor. Moreover, the war led to the final completion of Italian unity, as the Italians took advantage of the war to capture Rome. Finally, the Franco-German War led to the reopening of the Eastern Question.<sup>2</sup> At Bismarck's suggestion—for Bismarck was anxious

<sup>1</sup> The Duke of Cumberland, William IV's brother, had succeeded to the throne of Hanover in 1837, as female succession was not allowed.

<sup>2</sup> The terms of the Treaty of Paris which ended the Crimean War had been broken before the war of 1870, for Wallachia and Moldavia, which it was intended should remain separate, had been united in 1866 under the name of Rumania.



to keep both Russia and Great Britain employed—Russia, in 1871, took advantage of the Franco-German War to repudiate the article in the Treaty of Paris neutralizing the Black Sea. Great Britain had not intervened in either of the two wars in which Prussia had been engaged, and was perhaps beginning to feel that she had better not spend any more time bothering about the Continent, except as regards the Near East. And even this infraction of the Treaty by Russia only met with a protest from her, which, unbacked by armed force, was disregarded; and a European conference met soon afterwards and rescinded the article.

#### 4. The Eastern Question, 1876–1913

If Russia had repudiated one of the terms of the Treaty of Paris, the Sultan had neglected to carry out another; his promised reforms for his Christian subjects, "the worthless promise of a worthless potentate", came to nothing, and "the relations between the Sultan and his subjects, that is to say, the relation between the tyrant and his victims, went on just as before". Consequently there was continual unrest in the Balkan States. In 1875 the people of Hercegovina revolted; and in 1876 their example was followed by the Bulgarians, whilst Serbia and Montenegro declared war on the Turks. The Turks in revenge perpetrated in *Bulgaria* the most terrible barbarities. Thousands of people were massacred and tortured—in one place, it was said, a child was impaled on a standard and paraded through the streets.

The Bulgarian atrocities, 1876.

These atrocities drew Gladstone from his retirement (p. 635), and in a series of speeches and pamphlets he summoned the nation to support a policy of freeing the Christian subjects of Turkey from the Sultan's control, and demanded that the Sultan's officials should be cleared "bag and baggage" out of the province they had "desolated and profaned". Lord Beaconsfield, on the other hand, who was Prime Minister, distrusted the political designs of Russia, and favoured what he called the "traditional" policy of Great Britain—the maintenance of the integrity of the Ottoman dominions. The British nation was divided between the horror inspired by Turkish cruelty and

British Policy.



the distrust provoked by long experience of Russian diplomacy. But when Russia, after the failure of an attempt to secure European intervention in Turkey, declared war, and in 1877 invaded the Turkish territories in Europe and Asia, the latter sentiment steadily gained ground, and the memory of Turkish barbarity was gradually obliterated by the accounts of the bravery which the Turks exhibited for six months, against overwhelming forces, in the defence of *Plevna*, their stronghold in the north of the Balkans.

But *Plevna* fell at last, and the Russians threatened to attack Constantinople itself. The Russians were consequently able to force the Turks to make peace (1878). But the terms Treaty of Berlin, 1878. imposed by Russia were such that Great Britain could not acquiesce in them, nor could Russia be allowed to settle the Eastern Question without reference to the other powers concerned. War seemed imminent between Russia and Great Britain. A British fleet brought up near Constantinople, and six thousand troops were sent from India to Malta. But then Russia agreed to refer the arrangements to a European congress. It met at Berlin, under the presidency of Bismarck, Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Salisbury being the British representatives. After critical negotiations a treaty, known as the *Treaty of Berlin*, was agreed upon (1878). By its terms Rumania and Serbia and Montenegro were declared independent of Turkey; Bosnia and Hercegovina, though still belonging to Turkey, were put under Austrian administration; Russia received a fort and a port in Asia Minor; whilst Great Britain, by a separate treaty with Turkey, was given control of Cyprus. Two new States were created—one, Bulgaria, which was to be self-governing though under Turkish suzerainty, and the other, Eastern Rumelia, which was placed under a Christian governor nominated by the Sultan but approved by the powers. At the time the treaty was thought to be a great triumph for Great Britain, and Lord Beaconsfield proclaimed that he brought back "peace with honour".

European statesmen hoped that the Treaty of Berlin might prove a permanent solution of the Balkan troubles. This was far, however, from being the case, and before long infractions of it began to take place. Thus in 1885 Eastern Rumelia was united



to Bulgaria—and on this occasion Great Britain supported the union though she had been opposed to it seven years before. Then in 1908 occurred the “Young Turk” revolution in Turkey, and the Sultan and his régime were overthrown. In that same year, and partly as a consequence, Austria annexed Bosnia and Hercegovina, and though this annexation aroused the ire of Russia and Serbia, no action was taken by the European Powers. In 1908 also Bulgaria declared its complete independence of Turkey.

During the years 1912-3, renewed troubles broke out in the Balkans. First, Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece, and Montenegro combined against Turkey. Then, having driven back the Turks, except from a small district round Constantinople, the allies quarrelled; and Bulgaria's greed led all the other Balkan powers, including Rumania, to combine against her, with the result that at the Treaty of Bucharest in 1913 she obtained less than was originally intended, whilst Turkey recovered Adrianople. A year later, 1914, the unending quarrels and rivalries in the Balkans provided the occasion for the greatest war in history—the World War, 1914-8.

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## XLIX. Great Britain and World Politics, 1878-1914

Up till 1878 the gaze of European statesmen was fixed mainly upon affairs in Europe; after that date, it was fixed to an increasing extent upon affairs in Asia and Africa. What were the causes of this change? Partly, no doubt, it was due to the fact that, for the generation that lived after 1878, there was no European problem that pressed for immediate solution; Italy had attained her nationality, Prussia had fought out her struggle with Austria and with France, and even the Eastern Question ceased for a time to be explosive. Then, again, in the years previous to 1878 the value of extra-European possessions was hardly realized. Cobden, the free

World-Policy  
of European  
States.



trader, looked upon the Indian Empire with an "eye of despair". Disraeli, though later he held quite different opinions, expressed the popular view of colonies in 1852, "these wretched colonies will all be independent in a few years and are like a millstone round our necks"; whilst Bismarck said in 1876, "I do not want colonies at all. Their only use is to provide sinecures." But in Great Britain the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria in 1897, which was made the occasion of a great Imperial gathering, the Colonial Secretaryship of Joseph Chamberlain, the speeches of Lord Rosebery, the pen of Rudyard Kipling, and the dreams of Cecil Rhodes (p. 709), all helped, with the greater ease of communications, to increase the knowledge of and the national pride in the British Empire, and the belief that every extension of its power and influence was fraught with illimitable possibilities for the future peace and prosperity of the world. Above all, the European nations began gradually to realize the necessity for expansion. They had to find outlets for their growing population,<sup>1</sup> and fresh markets for the products of their growing manufactures. Africa and Asia offered the best openings for their enterprise, and the field of rivalry between them was, therefore, transferred from Europe to these two vast continents.

## 1. Great Britain and Egypt

To begin with, we must endeavour to trace the relations of Great Britain with Egypt. Mehemet Ali had, in 1811, made himself absolute master of Egypt, though he was still subject nominally to the sovereignty of Turkey (p. 656). His grandson, *Ismail Pasha*,<sup>2</sup> succeeded in 1863, and was accorded by the Sultan the title of *Khedive*—in return for a substantial money payment. Ismail's reign was, it has been said, "a carnival of extravagance and oppression". He possessed an unrivalled capacity for spending money, for he added to the wasteful tastes of an Oriental despot a genuine desire to introduce the conveniences of Western civilization, without the least idea how to do it economically and effectively.

Egypt and  
Ismail Pasha,  
1863-79.

<sup>1</sup> The population of people of European extraction increased from 170 millions to 510 millions in the course of the nineteenth century.

<sup>2</sup> Pasha is a Turkish title usually given to generals and governors of provinces.



During his sixteen years of rule, the debt of Egypt increased from £3,000,000 to £100,000,000, and every form of extortion was practised on his subjects in order to furnish him with money, the "fellaheen"—the Egyptian peasants—being perhaps, during his reign, the most wretched people in all the world. Some of his expenditure was wise. He was, for instance, a great supporter of the *Suez Canal Company*, and bought large quantities of its shares. But the greater part of the money he obtained was recklessly squandered. One instance must suffice: an Egyptian princess ran up a bill of £150,000 with a French dressmaker.

Eventually the crash came. Ismail first sold all his Suez Canal shares, Disraeli buying £4,000,000 worth of them for Great Britain. This purchase gave us a large share in the control of the Suez Canal. The immense importance of that Canal—which was completed in 1869—to the British Empire, in peace and in war, came to be gradually realized, and with that realization British concern for the affairs of Egypt increased. Moreover, the geographical position of Egypt made her, as a British Prime Minister once said, the gateway between East and West. She divided the British Empire; "she was a corridor country, and as such the corridor must be kept open". Then, in 1876, Ismail repudiated the State debts. The creditors were Europeans, chiefly British and French. The French Government wanted intervention in order to protect the interests of French creditors, and Great Britain, somewhat reluctantly and in order to prevent the French acting alone, agreed to co-operate. The upshot was that, after various complicated negotiations, the Sultan in 1879 agreed to depose Ismail and to nominate Tewfik, his son, in his place. The financial supervision of Egypt was put under two Controllers appointed by Great Britain and France respectively; and that arrangement before long came in effect to mean the complete control by these two officials of both the Constitution and the Administration of Egypt.

The *Dual Control*, as it has been called, was not to last for long. There shortly arose an anti-foreign movement, directed against any Turkish or European control of Egyptian affairs, the motto of which was "Egypt for the Egyptians". In the army there was great discontent, chiefly owing to the arrears of pay, and in 1881 *Arabi Pasha*,

Arabi Pasha's  
movement,  
1881-2.



an army officer, led a mutiny, and practically obtained control of the government. In May, 1882, the combined British and French fleets were sent to Alexandria, where the Egyptian soldiers who had been gathered by Arabi were putting the city in a state of defence. On June 11, the mob in Alexandria rioted, and some fifty Europeans were brutally murdered. The country was drifting into anarchy and at the end of June the Great Powers held a conference at Constantinople to decide what should be done; but they decided nothing. Lord Granville, the Foreign Secretary in Gladstone's ministry, whose policy had hitherto been of a somewhat dawdling character, then suggested to France a joint bombardment of Alexandria, but France, fearful of Bismarck's designs if French energies were absorbed in Egypt, refused. Great Britain acted alone, and, on the Egyptians refusing to pull down the batteries, *Alexandria* was bombarded and the batteries destroyed (1882), but not before another massacre had taken place. Having once begun to interfere, Great Britain could not stop. Lord Wolseley was sent to Egypt, and crushed Arabi's forces at *Tel-el-Kebir* (September, 1882). The Khedive's power was re-established, some of the British forces being left provisionally in the country.

No sooner was the Arabi revolt suppressed than danger arose elsewhere. The Khedive ruled not only Egypt, but also the Sudan, which extends south of Wadi Halfa, and was twice as big as France and Germany put together. Mahommedans believe that a "Mahdi" will appear on earth, on whose coming the world will be converted to Mahommedanism.

The Mahdi and the evacuation of the Sudan, 1883.

A man in the Sudan proclaimed himself to be "the Mahdi" in 1881. The Sudanese under Ismail's rule had suffered every form of misgovernment, large parts of the land having been leased out to slave-hunters. Consequently they flocked to join the new prophet, and a formidable rebellion was soon in progress. The Khedive, after Arabi's downfall, sent a general called Hicks to crush the Dervishes, as the Mahdi's followers were called; but the army was raw and undisciplined, and was totally destroyed (1883).<sup>1</sup> It was clear that the Sudan must be evacuated, at any rate for a time. The

<sup>1</sup> The army was led astray by the guides, and after wandering three days and three nights without water, came upon a force of the enemy whom it was too feeble to resist.



Egyptian Government was unwilling to adopt this course, and consequently the British Government had again to interfere, and to insist upon it.

But at once two questions arose—how far was it possible to extricate the Egyptian garrisons in the Sudan, amounting to some fifty thousand men? And what form of government, if any, was to be set up in the Sudan after its evacuation? The British Government decided to send to the Sudan *General Gordon* with the object mainly of superintending the evacuation and of saving as many garrisons as he could, and incidentally of making what arrangements were possible for the future government of the country. Gordon was a hero of heroes, brave, chivalrous, impetuous, emotional, self-confident;<sup>1</sup> but because of some of these very qualities it was a mistake to send him. When he reached *Khartoum* (February, 1884), the capital of the Sudan, it was perhaps natural that he should lay the chief stress, not upon the unadventurous policy of evacuation, but upon the future settlement of the country and the welfare of its inhabitants. He made various suggestions with this object to the British Government, and finally wanted, in his own words, “to smash the Mahdi” with British or Indian troops. Meantime any chance there ever was of extricating the garrisons passed away; the tribes round Khartoum rose for the Mahdi; and, finally, Gordon’s own retreat was cut off.

Gordon's  
mission,  
1884-5.

Gordon had to be relieved. But for five fatal months Gladstone’s Government procrastinated. Finally Lord Wolseley was sent; an advance guard was hurried forward, only to learn, when within sight of Khartoum, that General Gordon, after an heroic defence of three hundred and seventeen days, had been killed, and that the town had fallen two days previously (1885). The shame and grief of Great Britain at the failure to save General Gordon may be imagined. But nothing could now be done. The fall of Khartoum meant the complete evacuation of the Sudan south of Wadi Halfa, and

Death of  
Gordon,  
1885.

<sup>1</sup> Gordon’s most famous exploits were in China. He commanded a force, known as “the Ever-victorious Army”, on behalf of the Chinese government in the formidable Taiping rebellion. His force won thirty-three engagements in under two years (1863-4), and stamped out the rebellion. Gordon led the storming-parties in person, carrying a little cane. His soldiers regarded it as a magic wand, protecting his life and leading them to victory.



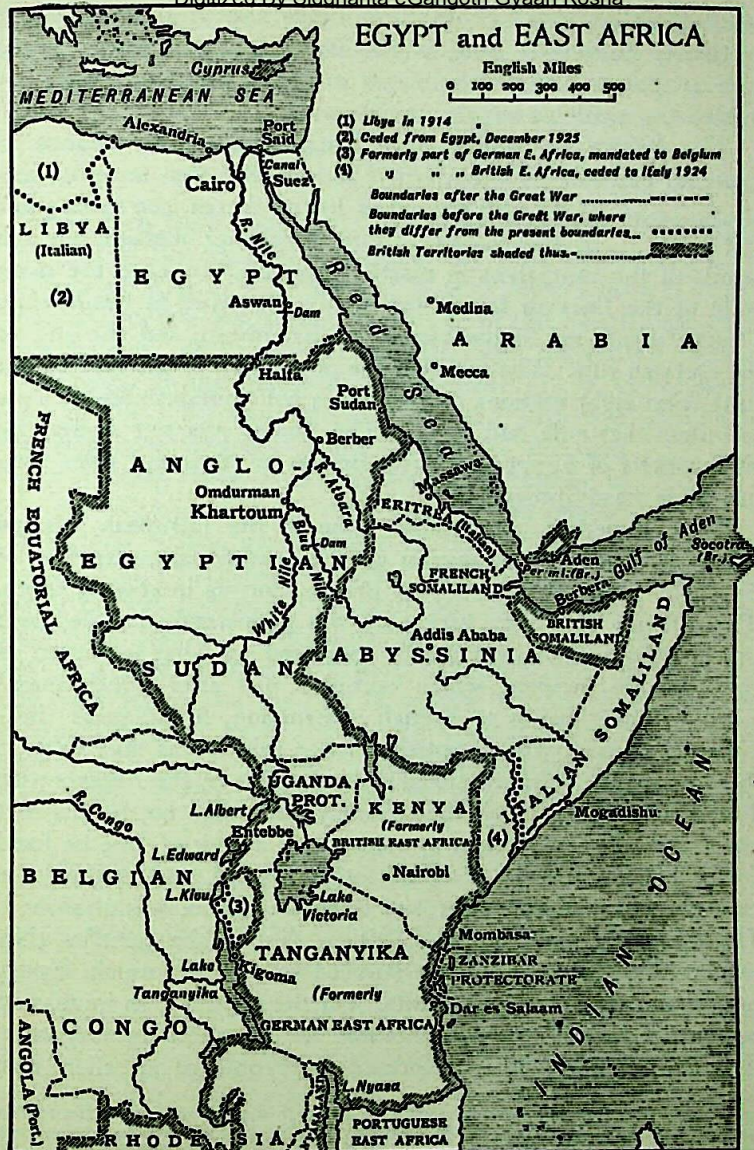
the greater part of the garrisons fell into the hands of the Mahdi.

Meantime in Egypt itself, "the land of paradox", a strange situation developed. Arabi's movement had been quelled by British forces—but what was then to happen? Great Britain could not annexe the country or establish a formal protectorate without violating pledges which she had given to European powers. On the other hand, she could not abandon it; the Khedive could not stand alone, and it was clear that, in order not only to reform the country but to save it from anarchy, some power must interfere. To call in the Turk would have made things worse, whilst to ask for the intervention of other European powers would only have increased complications. The upshot was that Great Britain decided upon a provisional occupation, which was to last until Egypt should be able to look after herself—and that occupation, which some optimists hoped would last only for a few months, lasted, to the infinite benefit of the country, for forty years. Up till the World War the Sultan of Turkey still possessed, in name, the sovereign power. He received an annual tribute; the Turkish flag was the Egyptian flag, and the Egyptians themselves were the Sultan's subjects. The Khedive and his ministers, in theory, were responsible for the government and carried on the administration of the country. But the real security for the peace of Egypt was the British army, the real security for its financial stability was the British treasury, and the real ruler of the country was, till his retirement in 1907, the British consul-general, Lord Cromer.

Under the guidance of Lord Cromer, "the creator of modern Egypt", British "advisers" to the Egyptian ministers reorganized the country. Three of the greatest evils of Egypt, the three C's as they have been called, were dealt with. The *courbash*, a strip of hippopotamus hide with a tapering end, once used with hideous frequency on the wretched Egyptians, was forbidden; the *corvée*, or forced labour, was stopped; and the British officials did a great deal to lessen the *corruption*—the wholesale bribery and sale of concessions—that used to prevail amongst native officials. Moreover, British engineers regulated the waters of the Nile, upon which the prosperity of Egypt depends. New systems of irrigation brought land into cultivation that was desert



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before, and increased doubly and trebly the productiveness of previously cultivated land, whilst the building of great dams, such as that at Aswan (completed in 1902), has enormously increased the available supply of Nile water.

The British occupation gave British officers the chance to create an efficient Egyptian army, and in 1896 that army under-  
 Reconquest of Sudan, 1898. took, with the aid of British forces, the reconquest of the Sudan. Lord Kitchener worked out the details of the campaigns in masterly fashion. In 1898 the main body of the Dervish forces was finally destroyed at *Omdurman*, a battle which led to the capture of Khartoum, and the end of the Dervish rule. The fact that the population of the Sudan had sunk from eight millions to four and a half millions showed how merciless that rule had been. The Sudan was put under the joint control of Egypt and Great Britain in 1899, and since then has made steady progress.

Not altogether unnaturally, some of the European nations looked with no little suspicion on the provisional occupation of Egypt by Great Britain and on British motives in staying there. The attitude of France especially was persistently hostile; and in 1898 the tension was greatly increased by what is known as the Fashoda incident which occurred just after Omdurman.<sup>1</sup> Lord Cromer, owing to French obstruction, found great difficulty in dealing with Egyptian finance, which was still subject, to some extent, to international control. But by the *Entente* with France in 1904 (p. 720), that country undertook not to obstruct the action of Great Britain by asking that a limit of time be fixed for British occupation or in any other matter; and at the same time the international control of Egyptian finance was abolished. Unfortunately, however, the British, despite the benefits they conferred on Egypt, did not succeed in winning much loyalty or affection from its inhabitants. On the contrary, as increasing prosperity caused the old miseries to be gradually forgotten, Egyptian unrest with interference by people of an alien race

<sup>1</sup> France wished to occupy the Upper Nile Valley with a view to uniting her possessions in West Africa with those on the Red Sea. She therefore sent two expeditions, one eastward from the French Congo under a Major Marchand, and the other westward. Major Marchand reached Fashoda, a place, by river, some 450 miles south of Khartoum. But Lord Kitchener had just won the Battle of Omdurman, and was in a strong enough position to force the retirement of Major Marchand, and the French Government gave way.



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and an alien religion began to grow.<sup>1</sup> That unrest came to a head in the years following the World War, and we shall deal with it in a later chapter (p. 767).

## 2. The "Grab for Africa"

We turn from Egypt to other parts of Africa. Till towards the end of the eighteenth century very little was known of the interior of Africa.<sup>2</sup> Between 1788 and 1830, however, Mungo Park and others discovered the course of the Niger; and in the first half of the nineteenth century some remarkable journeys were made up the Nile and in Abyssinia. Then, in the second half of the nineteenth century, between 1849 and 1889, came the important travels of many discoverers, the most famous being those of Livingstone and Stanley in Central Africa. Up till their time the knowledge of Central Africa was remarkably inaccurate—"the idea prevailed", in Livingstone's words, "that a large part of the interior of Africa consisted of sandy deserts into which rivers ran and were lost". Livingstone in his journeys from 1849-73 revolutionized the map of Africa; he travelled up and down the Zambezi River, was the first to see the Victoria Falls, and discovered, amongst other things, the true shapes of Lakes Nyasa and Tanganyika.<sup>3</sup> Stanley made a remarkable journey of 999 days (1874-7) from Zanzibar on the east coast to Boma on the

Livingstone  
and  
Stanley.

<sup>1</sup> Lord Cromer, when he finally left Egypt after 25 years of devoted service, had to drive through streets lined by armed British soldiers.

<sup>2</sup> A narrow strip in North-west Africa, a small piece of territory between the Senegal and the Gambia, parts of the west coast south of the Congo mouth, the Cape Province south of the Orange River, a narrow strip up the Zambezi River, and a larger region covering Egypt and Abyssinia north of the Blue Nile, represented the total known area in 1788.

<sup>3</sup> "His", said Lord Curzon, "was the type of character and career that will always remain an inspiration for our race. Born with no social advantages, possessing no prospects, backed by no powerful influence, this invincible Scotsman hewed his way through the world, and carved his name deep in the history of mankind, until in the end he was carried to his grave in Westminster Abbey amid the sorrowing admiration of an entire people, and bequeathed a name which has been, and will ever be, a light to his countrymen. How did he do it? By boldness of conception, by fertility and courage in execution, by a noble endurance in suffering and disappointment, by self-sacrifice unto death, he wrested triumph even from failure, and in the darkness never failed to see the dawn. His spirit hovers over Central Africa, just as that of Cecil Rhodes, of many of whose ideals he was the unconscious parent, broods over the South African regions that bear his name."



west, circumnavigating on the way Lakes Victoria and Tanganyika, and then following the River Congo down to the Atlantic.

The journeys of Livingstone and Stanley and other explorers aroused the greatest interest in Europe. Individual Europeans of every race began to swarm out to Africa. No doubt their motives were somewhat mixed. With some it was the love of adventure; with others, as it was in the case of Livingstone, it was missionary zeal. Some hoped to find gold or diamonds or to find openings for trade; others were inspired by a patriotic enthusiasm to secure for their country, before it was too late, the influence they felt it ought to possess in that

The Beginning  
of the Grab for  
Africa.

vast continent. The enthusiasm for Africa spread from individuals to governments; and the European powers began a general scramble for more territories and "spheres of influence".<sup>1</sup> It is easy to condemn this invasion of Africa by European people, and its partition by European governments. But the white people were warmly welcomed, at all events at first, by the black people. And it is well to remember what "Africa for the Africans" at that time meant—"the dead, effortless degradation which it represented, broken only by interludes of blood lust, slaughter, slavery, and unspeakable suffering".

Needless to say, however, the partition of Africa led to long and complicated negotiations between various European powers, in which Lord Salisbury was our chief negotiator;<sup>2</sup> and as has already been said (p. 640), it was largely due to him that it was carried out, not indeed without some friction (for that was impossible), but at all events without any open warfare between European nations.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "When I left the Foreign Office in 1880," said Lord Salisbury, "nobody thought about Africa. When I returned to it in 1885, the nations of Europe were almost quarrelling with each other as to the various portions of Africa which they could obtain. I do not exactly know the cause of this sudden revolution. But there it is. It is a great force—a great civilizing, Christianizing force."

<sup>2</sup> Here is part of a characteristic note from Lord Salisbury to the Secretary of State for the Colonies in 1888, showing the variety of topics at that moment under consideration: "We are thinking of trying to negotiate with Portugal. My hopes about the Zambezi are breaking down. It is of no use declaring a river to be a highway of nations where there is only one fathom of water in it—and not always that. Have you any strong feelings about the Sofala boundary? or Lake Ngami—on which Bismarck is casting the eyes of desire? . . . I hope you have not annexed the Savage Islands.—They will generate some very savage mainland in the neighbourhood of Berlin. They are clearly in the German 'Sphere of Influence'."

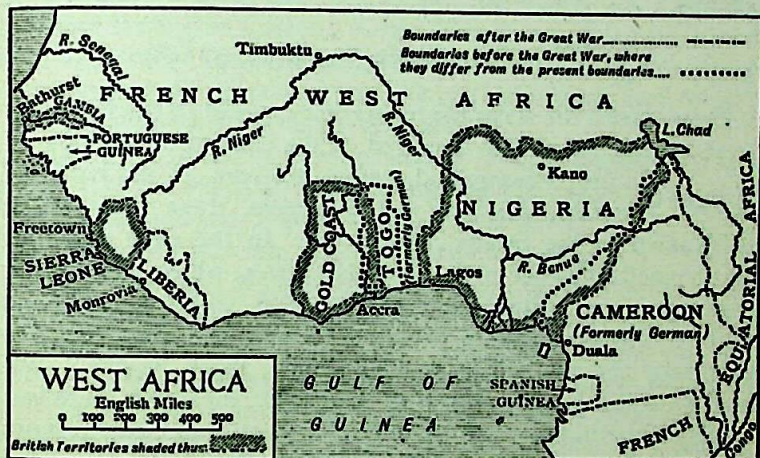
<sup>3</sup> One of the most troublesome of the negotiations was that with Germany over Eastern Africa; in May, 1890, came an interview between Lord Salisbury and the German



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The result was that France obtained in North-west Africa an enormous empire, stretching from Algiers to the Congo River, twenty times the size of France itself.<sup>1</sup> Germany obtained not far short of one million square miles on the east and west coasts of Africa, and Italy possessions bordering on the Red Sea or adjacent to it. King Leopold of Belgium had already formed the Congo Free State in 1880, and Portugal had extended her ancient possessions on either coast of Africa.

Great Britain herself was not behind other competitors. It is said that between 1879 and 1889 she added to her possessions



land equal in size to one-third of Europe. Some of these additions were in the East, such as Upper Burma (1886); but the larger part of them was in Africa. The British Empire in the south already included Cape Colony and Natal. To them were now added *Bechuanaland* and *Rhodesia* (p. 710). On the west coast, where the British Empire already included Sierra Leone and

Ambassador, when the former, according to the German Ambassador, revealed "after some hesitation the sum of his wishes regarding East Africa". He asked, among other things, for the Protectorate over Zanzibar and Witu. In return for these valuable concessions he offered the Germans Heligoland—an offer accepted by Germany as, in the view of the German Emperor and his Chancellor, the Kiel Canal (then being built) "is without Heligoland useless to our Navy".

<sup>1</sup> Much of it, however, is the "light, sandy soil" of the Saharan desert. In 1911 France obtained a virtual Protectorate over Morocco, though she was obliged to give a large slice of her territories in the Congo as "compensation" to Germany.



the Gold Coast, a British company, chiefly through the enterprise of Sir George Goldie, developed *Nigeria*, which became, in 1900, a British Protectorate and, in 1914, the Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria. On the east, the East Africa Company developed what are now known as *Kenya* Colony and Protectorate and *Uganda* Protectorate, the latter country being first penetrated about 1890. Moreover, protectorates were established over parts of Somaliland and Zanzibar respectively in 1884 and 1891. Great Britain was also engaged in various little wars in Uganda, in Nigeria, and with the Ashantis.

Great  
Britain's  
share.

### 3. The Far East (See Map, p. 696)

From Africa the scramble for territory spread to the Far East. Great Britain had already acquired, at the close of the eighteenth century, *Penang*, and, within ten years of the battle of Waterloo, *Malacca* and *Singapore*, these three being now known as the Straits Settlements. In the early seventies she obtained influence over the Malay States, which were finally federated under British protection in 1896, whilst in 1888 she obtained the protectorate of *North Borneo* and *Sarawak*, the latter state the creation of an Englishman, Rajah Brooke.<sup>1</sup> But there were still left the islands in the Pacific, for which there was a brisk competition between France, Germany, and Great Britain: the last had acquired the *Fiji Islands*<sup>2</sup> in 1874, and she added various other islands towards the end of the nineteenth century.

At the close of the nineteenth century the rivalry between European nations was transferred to China. Here, however, as elsewhere, Great Britain had already acquired a long start. China, it must be remembered, boasted of possessing the oldest civilization in the world, and looked with contempt on the mushroom growth of European

Great Britain  
and Chinese  
Wars, 1840  
and 1857-60.

<sup>1</sup> Rajah Brooke (died 1868), after running away from school, served for a time in the army of the East India Company. He subsequently inherited a fortune, bought a schooner, and sailed to Borneo in 1838, where he quickly established a great reputation with the natives. Unfortunately the coast tribes of Borneo were inveterate pirates and very cruel ones, the collection of as large a number of human heads as possible being with them a passionate hobby. Brooke aided the British navy to suppress piracy, and then became Rajah of Sarawak, a territory of some 28,000 square miles.

<sup>2</sup> The first effect, unfortunately, of British rule was an epidemic of measles which carried off one-third of the people.



nations.<sup>1</sup> Consequently the action of Chinese officials was apt to be high-handed, and had already caused two wars between Great Britain and China. The first occurred in 1840, when a Chinese Commissioner dealt in very summary fashion with British subjects who, with the connivance of minor officials, were smuggling opium into China. As a result of the war, Hong-Kong was ceded to Great Britain, and since that time the trade of Hong-Kong has been developed to such an extent that it now ranks amongst the six greatest ports in the world. The second war took place between 1857 and 1860, and was caused by the fact that Chinese officials had insulted our flag which was flying over a vessel trading at Canton. Great Britain was aided by France, and eventually China, after the Summer Palace at Peking had been destroyed, agreed to pay a large indemnity, and to allow European ministers to reside at Peking.

Later on, the other powers came in. France developed a large Empire to the south of China during the last twenty years of the nineteenth century; Russia occupied Port Arthur,<sup>2</sup> and gradually ate into the frontiers of northern China; Germany, in 1898, took advantage of the murder of two missionaries to acquire Kiau-Chau, whilst Great Britain acquired *Wei-hai-wei* (retroceded in 1930). Meantime mining and railway concessions were obtained in different districts by Europeans. Chinamen, perhaps naturally, resented these foreign activities in their country, and the result was the creation of a patriotic society known to foreigners as the *Boxers*,<sup>3</sup> who wanted all white men to be exterminated. The "Boxers" became supreme in Peking, and proceeded to besiege the foreign legations (1901). Consequently an international force was sent, which successfully relieved the legations, and at the close of the military operations China had to pay a large indemnity. In 1912, China, one of the oldest of monarchies, became a Republic, and the succeeding period witnessed the collapse of orderly government and the unending struggles of rival military chieftains for supremacy.

The "Boxer"  
outbreak, 1901.

<sup>1</sup> In the opinion of Chinamen, "all men under heaven" owed allegiance to their emperor, and in Chinese official documents the monarch of Great Britain was described as being "reverentially submissive", and as "having repeatedly paid tribute" to the Emperor of China.

<sup>2</sup> The Russians ceded Port Arthur to Japan in 1905, after the Russo-Japanese War.

<sup>3</sup> The Chinese name was I Ho Ch'nan or "Righteous Harmony Fists".



## L. History of India since 1823

It may be appropriate at this stage to return to the history of our great Indian Empire. That history has already been sketched till the end of Lord Hastings's rule in 1823 (Chap. XXXVIII), a rule which saw the final extension of our supremacy over the Native States in the interior, and we may now follow the course of events up till recent times. After 1823 the whole peninsula of India, from Cape Comorin in the south up to the Sind frontier and the Sutlej River on the north, was under British authority. Part of this vast territory was directly governed by the British; part was under the control of Indian Princes, subject, however, to a certain control by the British Government. Meantime other Rulerships had been created elsewhere. One dynasty had succeeded in founding the kingdom of Burma, and was even threatening Eastern Bengal, and another had succeeded in uniting most of the tribes of Afghanistan into one strong state; whilst *Ranjit Singh* had established a great state in the Punjab—the land of five rivers—a territory which stretched from Peshawar and Kashmir in the north to the Sutlej River in the south.

Difficulties soon arose between Great Britain and these independent rulers. The first war came in 1824–6 with *Burma*, and on its conclusion the British obtained the cession of some territory and an indemnity. In 1839 occurred the *First Afghan War*. The frontiers of the Russian Empire and the British Empire were, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, some 2000 miles apart; but gradually, as these empires expanded, their frontiers approached one another, till, at the end of the century, they were at one place barely a dozen miles apart. In the north-west, Afghanistan was regarded by the British as a buffer state between their own empire in India and the Russian Empire; and the good will of its ruler was considered essential for the security of the former. Matters began to look critical in 1837—the year of Queen Victoria's accession. The Shah of Persia, with encouragement from Russia, attacked Herat, a great stronghold in North-west Afghanistan; and when

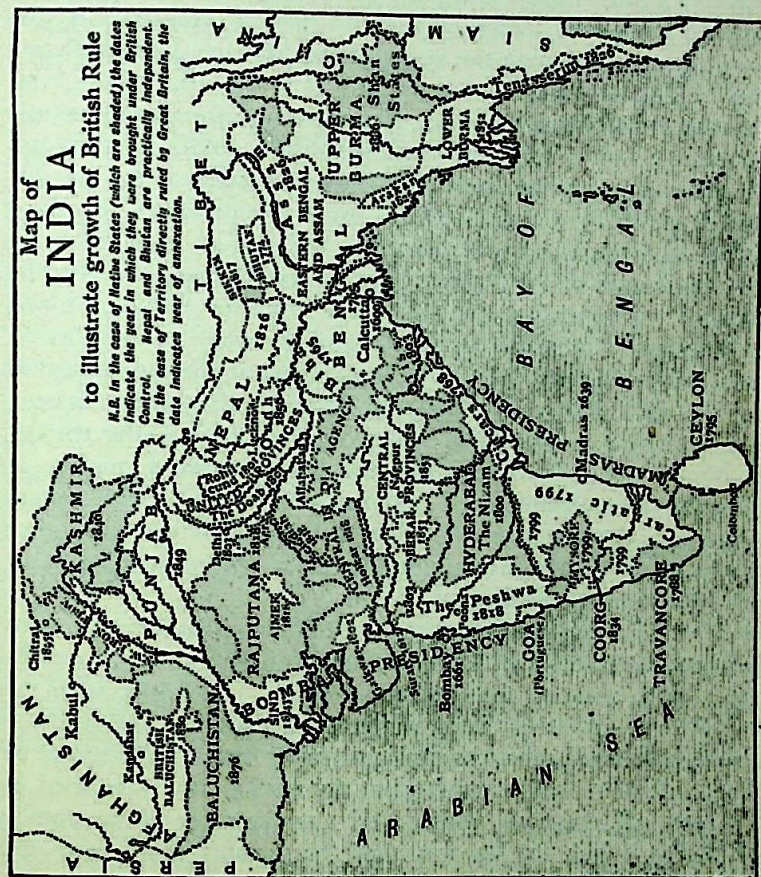
Condition of India after 1823.

The First Afghan War, 1839–41.



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the attack failed, Russian agents in the following year began to intrigue with *Dost Mohammed*, who had usurped the governorship of the greater part of Afghanistan. *Lord Auckland*, the Governor-general of India, decided, somewhat unwisely, to de-



pose Dost Mohammed, and to restore the prince whom Dost Mohammed had evicted. An expedition was accordingly sent; Kabul, the capital, and Kandahar were captured, and the old ruler restored, whilst Dost Mohammed eventually surrendered himself to the British.

(c271)

44-45°



For two years there was peace, though the Afghans were sulky and sullen. Then, in 1841, came a great disaster. The British agent at Kabul was murdered. At the same time the military stores were captured by the Afghans, and the weak British brigade at Kabul found itself inadequately supplied with food and surrounded by hostile forces. After two months' resistance it was forced to negotiate with the leader of the Afghans, Dost Mohammed's eldest son, and, under promise of safe-conduct from him, it started in the depth of winter, four thousand strong, and accompanied by twelve thousand camp-followers, to retire to India. Of this whole number only one reached Jelalabad, the nearest British garrison; the rest, except for a few prisoners, perished either from the effect of exposure to the cold or from the knife and the musket of the Afghan. Such a fearful disaster had to be avenged. Two armies marched from India for Kabul, the one by Kandahar, under General Nott, and the other by the Khyber Pass, under General Pollock. They arrived at the capital within a day of each other, burnt the great bazaar, rescued the prisoners, and returned; leaving Dost Mohammed to resume the throne. It is now generally agreed that the British made a mistake in deposing Dost Mohammed and in interfering in Afghanistan. Moreover, the tragic annihilation of the Kabul garrison upset the belief in British invincibility, and was not without its effect upon the subsequent mutiny.

The First Afghan War was the beginning of a series of campaigns, which lasted, with little intermission, till the final suppression of the Mutiny in 1859. Difficulties with the **Annexation of Sind, 1843.** rulers of *Sind*, as the lower valley of the Indus is called, led to a brilliant campaign against them undertaken by Sir C. Napier.<sup>1</sup> The subsequent annexation was described as "a very advantageous, useful, and humane piece of rascality", giving, as it did, for the first time the benefits of a strong and honest administration to the inhabitants.

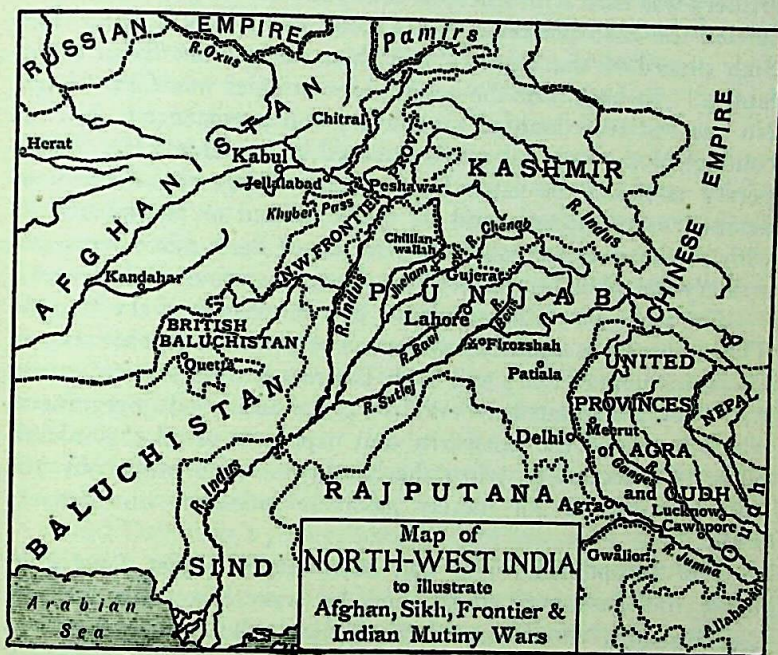
Our next war arose as a consequence of the death of the "Lion of the Punjab", as Ranjit Singh was called. He had been careful to keep on good terms with the British Government,

<sup>1</sup> Napier's punning dispatch announcing the conquest of the country—"Peccavi, I have Sind"—showed his own doubts as to whether hostilities were altogether justified.



but on his death, in 1839, there was no strong man to succeed him. Consequently there came a period of turbulence and anarchy inseparable from a series of disputed successions. Finally, a military committee became supreme, and proceeded to invade British territory. War therefore became inevitable. The inhabitants of the Punjab were largely *Sikhs*, who were members of a Hindu religious sect

The Sikh Wars,  
1846 and 1848-9.



founded in the fifteenth century; and Ranjit Singh had recruited from amongst these Sikhs an army of some eighty thousand, who have been compared for their steadiness and religious zeal to Cromwell's famous "Ironsides". The two Sikh wars were consequently the most formidable and stubborn that the British had to fight during the whole course of their conquest of India.

In the first war (1845) the British won four pitched battles in three weeks, one of them, that of *Firozshah*, being described as "the most bloody and obstinate contest ever fought by Anglo-



Indian troops". That war ended in an unsatisfactory peace, and hostilities soon reopened. In the second war (1848-9) the first battle was at *Chilianwallah*; here the British, though they managed to take the Sikh position, lost two thousand four hundred men killed and wounded, besides four guns and the colours of three regiments. A splendid victory, however, at *Gujerat* five weeks later destroyed the Sikh army. For the first two hours the artillery was used with splendid effect, and then a general advance carried the Sikh position. "We stood two hours in hell," so a Sikh described the battle, "and then we saw six miles of infantry." In both wars the commander-in-chief was *Lord Gough*. No one has ever doubted his bravery and persistence.<sup>1</sup> But his conduct of the war was much attacked at the time. His "Tipperary tactics"—he came from County Tipperary—were condemned as precipitate, and he was too fond of frontal attacks with the bayonet to make sufficient use of flank movements and artillery fire. His last victory was, however, a fine achievement.

The victory at *Gujerat* left the British masters of the Punjab. The country was annexed; and some of the most capable men in India, including Henry and John Lawrence, were sent to govern it. They inaugurated a period of peace and good government, which increased the prosperity and happiness of all the inhabitants. Consequently, when the Mutiny of 1857 broke out, the Punjab remained not merely passively quiescent but actively loyal.

The Second Sikh War had been fought whilst *Lord Dalhousie* was governor-general, and he was responsible for the annexation of the Punjab. But the Punjab was not the only extension of British territory which took place during his rule of eight years (1848-56). Outrages upon British merchants and insults to the British flag necessitated a fresh war with Burma in 1852, and led to the annexation of *Lower Burma* and the mouths of the Irrawaddy River. The misgovernment of *Oudh* by its rulers had been so scandalous that the East India Company sent orders for its annexation, which *Dalhousie* carried out in 1856. Moreover, *Lord Dalhousie* himself

<sup>1</sup> "He was as brave", said one of his fellow-officers, "as ten lions each with two sets of teeth and two tails;" and a saying of his, "I never was bate, and never shall be bate" (he spoke with a strong Irish brogue), has been often quoted.



was strongly of opinion that the direct rule of the British was much superior to native rule; and he consequently refused, in certain cases, to sanction the old custom by which Hindu princes who had no children of their own might adopt heirs to succeed them. Thus, when the rulers of *Nagpur* and of *Jhansi*, in Central India, died without direct heirs, their territories "lapsed" to the Company.

So far we have been concerned with the extension of the British control in India, but it must not be supposed that the efforts of British rulers were not directed to bettering the lot of their subjects. On the contrary, especially during the governorship of *Lord William Bentinck* (1828-35) and *Lord Dalhousie* (1848-56), great reforms were made. The former abolished *suttee*, as the compulsory suicide of Hindu widows on the death of their husbands was called;<sup>1</sup> suppressed the *thugs*, bands of hereditary assassins who roamed about India strangling travellers; encouraged educated natives to take a share in the government; made important financial reforms; and initiated a measure for giving liberty of the press. The latter reorganized the internal administration of India; developed canals; introduced the telegraph, the railway, and cheap postage; and encouraged education. Indeed Lord Dalhousie must be regarded, whether as empire builder or reformer, as one of the greatest of our proconsuls.

Social  
progress,  
1823-56.

Lord Dalhousie's policy, however, was one cause of the Indian Mutiny in 1857. Western reforms mystified and unsettled the Eastern mind, and many natives of India thought that the world was being turned upside down. To them the telegraph was magic, whilst the railway threatened the caste system because people of different castes had to travel together in the same carriage. It was even thought that all British projects of reform had but one design—the destruction of the Hindu religion. Again, the annexation policy of Lord Dalhousie, though undertaken with the best intentions, had aroused distrust. It was unfortunate, moreover, that *Lord Canning*, Lord Dalhousie's successor, was not made aware of the peculiar conditions of land tenure in Oudh, and that his subordinates aroused the

Causes of  
Mutiny  
of 1857.

<sup>1</sup> During one year in Bengal alone no less than eight hundred widows were burnt to death.



hostility of the great landowners in that province by a settlement of the land which did the landed aristocracy grievous injustice. Consequently, in the Mutiny, the landowners of Oudh were against the British.

But there were other causes of the Mutiny. It was primarily a mutiny of the Sepoys, and the causes were largely military. The native troops outnumbered the British by eight to one; they thought that the success of the British was due to them, and their opinion of British invincibility had been shaken by the Afghan and subsequently by the Crimean War. Moreover, an old prophecy that the rule of the British would end one hundred years after the Battle of Plassey was not without its effect. The occasion for the Mutiny arose, however, when the Enfield rifle was substituted for "Brown Bess". In those days the soldier had to bite the cartridge with his teeth, and the report spread like wildfire that the cartridges for the new rifle were smeared with the fat of cows and the lard of pigs. The cow was sacred to the Hindus, whilst the pig was an abomination to the Mahommedans. The story may have had some slight foundation of truth in it.<sup>1</sup> At all events the Sepoys believed it, and the agitators against British rule thus found a ready illustration of the deceitful designs of the British upon the sacred religions of the Indian peoples, and a cry which united the Hindu and the Mahommedan in a common opposition.

On Sunday afternoon, May 10, 1857, the Mutiny broke out at *Meerut*, where the Sepoys shot their officers and murdered what Europeans they could capture. From Meerut the mutineers streamed to *Delhi*, some 40 miles away, persuaded the native regiments stationed there to join in the rising, and proclaimed the descendant of the old Mogul Emperor, who still lived in the palace at Delhi, as ruler of India. About three weeks later, the Mutiny spread to the garrisons in Oudh and in the Ganges valley. The British position then appeared desperate. The districts affected by the Mutiny equalled in area France, Austria, and Prussia put together, and were inhabited by some ninety-four millions of people. The British

Outbreak  
of Mutiny,  
May, 1857.

<sup>1</sup> The cartridges had to be greased in order to fit into the groove of the barrel. Though the evidence is conflicting, it is probable that some of these cartridges—though they were almost immediately recalled—were smeared, by some mistake, with the ingredients to which objection was taken.



soldiers in all India numbered only thirty-nine thousand men, and at the opening of the Mutiny there were but three British regiments between Calcutta and Meerut. The revolting Sepoys were in possession of the old capital of Delhi, and had secured a figurehead in the Mogul king; they had shut up one British garrison at Cawnpore and another at Lucknow, the capital of Oudh; and to these three centres the mutineers were flocking from the other garrisons of Northern India.

The Indian Mutiny is, perhaps, the most tragic episode in our history. British officers were so confident in the loyalty of their own native regiments that they refused to take precautions, and were pitilessly shot by their men. Many white women and children were barbarously murdered, and the sufferings of the men and women besieged during the intense heat of that Indian midsummer were more fearful than can be imagined. But all else pales before the horrors of *Cawnpore*. The Europeans there, numbering some two hundred and fifty fighting men, and more than double that number of women, children, and invalids, took refuge in an open plain, defended by small earthworks. For eighteen days in the scorching heat they were exposed to attacks made by thousands of rebels. At the end of that time their position was hopeless, and they accepted the offer of a safe-conduct by boat down the river made by *Nana Sahib*, a prince who had joined the rebels because he had not received from the British Government a pension to which he thought he was entitled. The garrison marched to the river. But when they had embarked, a murderous fire was opened upon them; many were killed or drowned, and of the survivors the men were pursued and butchered save four, who managed to escape, whilst the women and children were captured and imprisoned. A fortnight later *Nana Sahib* gave orders for the slaughter of these prisoners, two hundred and ten in number; the horrible work was done, and the bodies, the dead with the dying, were thrown down a well (July 15).

The massacre  
of Cawnpore,  
July, 1857.

Never, however, did the British race display more heroic qualities than at this crisis in its history. When the mutineers, at the opening of the Mutiny, reached Delhi, *Lieutenant Willoughby*, with a little garrison of eight men, defended the great magazine of Delhi against hundreds of assailants, and then blew it up so



that the mutineers should not gain possession of it. In the Punjab, *John Lawrence*, aided by *Edwardes*, *Chamberlain*, and *John Nicholson*, stamped out with stern and untiring energy the beginnings of mutiny amongst the regiments stationed in that province. A British force of barely four thousand men advanced upon Delhi, won a battle against overwhelming numbers, occupied the famous *Ridge*, which stretched to within three-quarters of a mile of the city walls, and held it against the desperate sorties of the thirty thousand Sepoys who defended the city. *Havelock* and one thousand five hundred men, in an attempt to save Cawnpore, marched in nine days, in an Indian July, one hundred and twenty-six miles, and fought four actions. The garrison in the Residency grounds of Lucknow—its gallant commander, Henry Lawrence, was killed on the second day of the siege—consisted of only a thousand British fighting men and seven hundred loyal Sepoys. It had to defend an enclosure a mile in circumference, made up of detached buildings and gardens connected by palisades and ditches, against an enemy which could bring up artillery within one hundred and fifty yards, and occupy houses within fifteen yards of its defences. Yet for eighty-seven days it successfully held this position against all attempts at storming, and the still greater dangers of mining, made by hugely superior forces.

Yet the heroism of British soldiers must not lead us to forget the services of those natives who were loyal. The native armies of Bombay and Madras remained unaffected by the revolting Sepoys. The native princes, for the most part, held aloof from the Mutiny; and some gave the British active assistance, such as the chief of Patiala, who protected the great road running from the Punjab to Delhi. Sepoys fought bravely for us in the Residency at Lucknow, and on the "Ridge" at Delhi. The Guides, for instance, horse and foot, started for Delhi at six hours' notice, and marched "at the hottest season of the year through the hottest region on earth" for twenty-one days at an average of twenty-seven miles a day. Their bravery in the operations at Delhi, when they lost half their men, and all their British officers were either killed or wounded, was only equalled by that of the Gurkhas. Moreover, even some of the revolting regiments protected their officers and aided them to



escape, whilst touching stories are told of the fidelity shown by native servants towards the British women and children.

By the end of *September* the critical period of the Mutiny was over. In the previous month the "Ridge" had been reinforced by a column from the Punjab under John Nicholson. Owing largely to Nicholson's heroism and energy, Delhi was finally stormed on the 14th September, though Nicholson himself was mortally wounded. Five days of street fighting followed before the rebels were completely expelled from the city. Havelock, through no fault of his own, had arrived too late to save Cawnpore, but he and Outram, "the Bayard of India", were able to fight their way to Lucknow and to relieve the garrison (September 25), though they were in turn besieged when they got there. Reinforcements then began to pour in from Great Britain. In *November*, Colin Campbell was able to make a further advance upon Lucknow, and the Residency was again relieved and the troops withdrawn.

Storming of  
Delhi (Sept.)  
and relief  
of Lucknow  
(Sept. and Nov.),  
1857.

It took some time, however, before the Mutiny was finally suppressed. The city of Lucknow was not finally captured till 1858. In the same year a brilliant campaign was carried out by Sir Hugh Rose in Central India, where the Mutiny had spread, and not till the spring of 1859 were hostilities completely at an end. Stern punishment was meted out to those who deserved it, as the tragedies of the Mutiny, and especially of Cawnpore, made it impossible for the British to be altogether merciful. That considerable severity should be shown in revenge was inevitable, but the Governor-General, Lord Canning, successfully exerted his influence on behalf of clemency.<sup>1</sup>

The Mutiny marks an epoch in Indian history. In the first place, the Queen's Government became directly responsible for the government of India, and the rule of the East India Company came to an end. This was announced by a Proclamation of the Queen in November, 1858, the felicitous wording of which was due to the suggestions which the Queen made to the Prime Minister, Lord Derby. Some years later, in 1877, the assumption by the Queen of the title of Empress of

Results of  
Mutiny.

<sup>1</sup> He was called "Clemency Canning"—a nickname which was first given in impatience and anger, but remained to be an honour.



India symbolized the change. Secondly, in India itself the period of warfare came to an end. Thereafter the *Pax Britannica* was imposed upon India, and no hostilities again occurred in the interior of that vast continent. Thirdly, the Mutiny affected the policy of the British. Reforms were in future undertaken with a due regard to native susceptibilities. Lord Dalhousie's policy of annexing native states on the failure of direct heirs was abandoned. The proportion of British troops to native troops was increased, and for many years the artillery was worked mainly by British soldiers.

Over the history of India since 1857 we must pass briefly. Suspicion of Russian designs was the most prominent characteristic in the foreign policy of the Indian Government. Russian intrigues at Kabul led to a *Second Afghan War* (1878-80). The Amir of Afghanistan was deposed, and the new Amir had to consent to receive a British resident. In a few months the resident was murdered and his escort of Guides killed after an heroic defence. Hence a campaign had to be undertaken, which was famous for the march of *Lord Roberts* from Kabul to Kandahar. Eventually a prince called *Abdur Rahman* was made Amir, and the British then retired. *Abdur Rahman* (died 1901) and his successor kept on good terms with the Indian Government, which gave to the Amir a large annual subsidy for the maintenance of an army of defence to guard against the dangers of a Russian invasion.

The relations between Russia and British India remained uneasy and suspicious for some time after the Afghan War, and hostilities were at times imminent, especially in 1884. The Russians were suspected of attempting an advance upon India through Persia, and their railway extension to the edge of the Afghan frontier was viewed with apprehension. The Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907, however, relieved the situation. Russia recognized Afghanistan as outside her sphere of influence, and undertook to conduct political negotiations with the Amir only through Great Britain. On the north-east frontier the situation was made more secure, as both Great Britain and Russia undertook not to interfere with the domestic affairs of Tibet or to annex any part of its territory. Great Britain at the same time recognized the special interests of

The Second  
Afghan War,  
1878-80.

Anglo-Russian  
Convention,  
1907.



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Russia in North Persia, whilst Russia recognized those of Great Britain in the south-east of that country, which included that frontier of Persia which marches with our own Indian frontier.

But the easiest access to India is by sea and not by land, and the approaches to India by that element have been carefully guarded. At the entrance to the Red Sea, Aden and the Island of Perim belong to Great Britain, whilst the purchase of the Suez Canal shares by Disraeli (see p. 673) gave Great Britain a large control over that canal. In the *Persian Gulf* the position of Great Britain has long been dominant. It was Great Britain who made the gulf safe for commerce, and she has made treaties with the tribes that border its shores.

The defences of India.

Meantime since the Mutiny the land frontier of India has been extended. The *Second Afghan War* led to the annexation of Quetta and other districts in the south-east of Afghanistan. A *Third Burmese War* was forced upon Great Britain in 1885, and led to the annexation of Upper Burma. Gradually, moreover, our suzerainty was proclaimed over the tribes in the north-west, which live in the hills between the plains of India and the frontier of Afghanistan. In 1893 our supremacy over them was recognized by Afghanistan, but, except in certain districts, we have left the tribesmen to govern or misgovern themselves. As with the Highlanders of old, plunder is the romance of their lives; and to rob and kill one another, and to combine in making raids upon the neighbouring plains, has been their main occupation for generations. The raids which they have made, besides the more dangerous combinations that have been organized under the influence of fanatical Mahommedan priests, have necessitated various expeditions, such as those of *Chitral* (1895) and *Tirah* (1897), and the campaign against the *Zakka Khels* and the *Mohmands* in 1908.

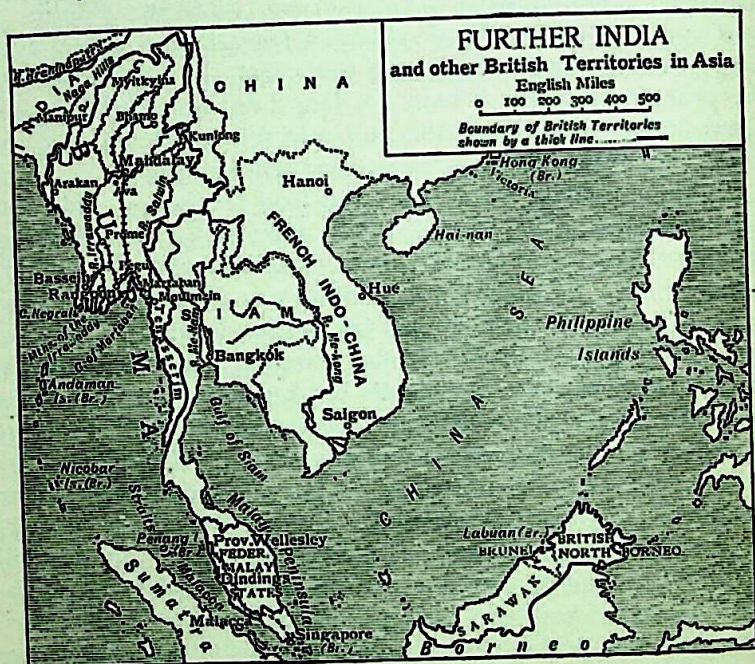
Extension of Indian Empire since 1857.

But the main energies of British statesmen in India after the Mutiny were occupied in promoting the welfare of the two hundred and thirty millions of people under their own immediate control, as well as keeping in touch with the six hundred Indian Princes who govern, "under undefined and undefinable British control", sixty millions of subjects. The British in India have developed what is, in some respects, the most efficient, and, so far as its higher branches at

Social progress since 1859.



all events are concerned, one of the least corrupt administrations in the world. They have secured internal peace, and fought, as far as human agency is able to fight, against the twin horrors of India, the plague and the famine. They have built railways and canals. They have organized a most efficient medical service, and they have encouraged education.



The awakening of the East, however, has affected India as well as other countries. The remarkable transformation of Japan in the latter part of the nineteenth century and her triumph over Russia in 1905 (p. 720), and the Indian unrest.

Revolutions in Turkey in 1908 (p. 671) and in China in 1912 (p. 683), were not without their influence upon India. It was natural that the educated natives in India, who still of course formed but a tiny fraction of the population, should, as a result of the education on Western lines provided for them by their British governors, wish to have more self-government. Consequently there occurred a certain unrest in



India, as well as some seditious movements. This desire for a greater share in the government was, however, realized by the British nation. Natives of India, who had always filled almost exclusively the lower branches of the administration, were admitted to the higher branches as well. Under Lord Minto and Lord Morley's administration of India (1906-10),<sup>1</sup> further changes were made. A larger elective element was introduced into the Viceroy's Legislative Council, and henceforth one native of India at least was to be a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council. Legislative Councils, partly nominated and partly elected, were extended to every province. Finally, it was agreed that two natives of India should be nominated to sit on the Secretary of State's Indian Council in London.

Great Britain accomplished, in the opinion of a French historian, one miracle in uniting Hindus and Mahommedans, Sikhs and Bengalis, Parsees and Christians, under one sceptre; whether she will ever be able to accomplish another miracle by combining, in the Indian continent, the two ideals of good government and self-government remains to be seen. But what the future relations may be between Great Britain and the Indian peoples no one can prophesy. In 1914 the questions which Lord Curzon, Viceroy from 1899 to 1905, asked at the beginning of the century remained still unanswered—what is in the heart of these sombre millions in India? whither are we leading them? what is it all to come to? where is the goal? The answers which the British Government attempted to give to some of them after the World War will be dealt with in a later chapter (pp. 767-8).

The future  
of India.

<sup>1</sup> Lord Minto as Viceroy in India, and Lord Morley as Secretary of State in England.



## LI. The Self-Governing Dominions and their History

We turn from India, the former scene of one of the most benevolent and efficient despotisms in the world's history, to a unique product of the British Empire—the *Self-Governing Dominion*. The problem that Great Britain had to solve was a difficult one. How was a colony “to be a daughter in her mother's house and be a mistress in her own”? How was Great Britain to give to her colonies the control over their own affairs, and yet preserve any connection with them? To British statesmen, both Whigs and Tories, these two objects for long appeared, in the words of the Duke of Wellington, “completely incompatible”. In Canada, however, a solution was at last achieved, and we must now trace briefly how this was accomplished.

The problem  
of self-  
government.

### I. Canada and Newfoundland

It may be remembered that Canada, by an Act passed in 1791, was divided into two provinces, an Upper and a Lower, each possessing a governor who was nominated by the British ministry, a legislative council nominated by the British governor, and an elected assembly (p. 511). Soon after 1815 discontent with this form of government began to develop, for the assembly had no control over the expenditure of the ministry, and, not unnaturally, desired it. The situation was aggravated owing to the fact that in Upper Canada the offices of state were monopolized by a few families, whilst in Lower Canada there was constant friction between the French and the British colonists, who were, it was said, so hostile to one another “that they only met in the jury-box, and then only to the utter obstruction of justice”. The discontent came to a head in 1837, just after Queen Victoria's accession.<sup>1</sup> In that year there were in both provinces small rebellions, which, however, were put

The Canadian  
rebellion, 1837.

<sup>1</sup> When the *Te Deum* for Queen Victoria's accession was sung, many of the congregation in Lower Canada walked out.



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down without difficulty. But the country was full of unrest, and it seemed, in the words of Peel, that "another Ireland might grow up in every colony which Great Britain possessed".

In 1838, however, *Lord Durham* was sent out with full powers to deal with the situation.<sup>1</sup> Lord Durham, it has been said, was the first British statesman since Chatham who recognized the latent possibilities of the empire, and he was long enough in Canada to be able to issue a

Development of  
self-government  
in Canada.

report which marks an epoch in the history of our colonial policy. In that report he advocated, first, the grant to the colonial assembly of full control in nearly all internal affairs; and secondly, the union of the two provinces of Upper and Lower Canada. His second proposal was adopted first; and in 1841 these two provinces were joined, and a new constitution drawn up. But Canada did not have to wait long for responsible government; for in 1847 *Lord Elgin*, Lord Durham's son-in-law, was made governor. He adopted the same position for himself as that which the Monarch occupied in the mother country; that is to say, he left to a ministry dependent upon a majority in the popular assembly the responsibility for the conduct of affairs, whilst reserving to himself the right to give advice, and in times of crisis to intervene. With Lord Elgin's seven years' governorship of Canada the self-governing colony became an accomplished fact, and before long the other colonies achieved the same measure of independence.

Upper and Lower Canada were united; but it still remained for these two provinces to be federated, first with the maritime provinces to the east, and then with the great territories to the west and north, which had yet to be developed. The former was accomplished on July 1, 1867, when the Dominion of Canada was created, federating *Ontario* and *Quebec*, as the old Upper and Lower Provinces were called, with *Nova Scotia* and *New Brunswick*. The latter came by slow degrees as the north-west was opened up. In 1870 Canada purchased the vast territories of the Hudson Bay Company, and formed out of part of them the province of

The Dominion  
of Canada  
(1867) and  
its growth.

<sup>1</sup> His somewhat high-handed action, however, in deporting to Bermuda eight of the leaders of the recent rebellion, without any form of trial, led to a storm of indignation in England, and to his own resignation after a bare five months' residence in Canada.



*Manitoba*, whilst a year later *British Columbia* was added to the Dominion; and in 1905 *Alberta* and *Saskatchewan* were created. Into the wonderful development of Canada in the twentieth century it is not our province to enter.

The United States had failed to conquer Canada or to detach her from her allegiance to Great Britain both in 1775 and in 1812; but many Canadians are, rightly or wrongly, of opinion that the supineness and weakness of British statesmen enabled this neighbour unduly to curtail Canadian boundaries. There were three important frontier disputes. The first, which affected Canada's frontiers in the east, was settled by the *Ashburton Treaty* of 1842, which recognized the claims of the United States to a wedge of territory between New Brunswick and Quebec. The second concerned the Far West, and was the subject of a compromise in 1846, the United States keeping Oregon, whilst British Columbia and Vancouver were retained for the British Empire. The third concerned the boundary of *Alaska*, which the United States had purchased from Russia. The matter was in 1903 referred to arbitration, and the decision on the whole favoured the American claims, for the sea boundary flanking the Yukon territories—which belonged to Canada and are now important because of the goldfields—was awarded to the United States.

Newfoundland, commonly termed the "oldest colony" of Great Britain, was perhaps discovered in 1497 by John Cabot in the reign of Henry VII, and in 1583 Sir Humphry Gilbert took possession of it for Queen Elizabeth. In the seventeenth century various colonizing expeditions were sent out there from England, but the French also settled there. In 1713, however, by the Treaty of Utrecht, the French gave up their claims to it, though they were left certain rights over the fishing. The great industry of Newfoundland was its fishing, and over these rights there was a great deal of friction with the French which lasted till the Convention with France in 1904, when she gave up her claims in return for monetary and territorial compensations.<sup>1</sup> Newfoundland obtained self-government in 1855.

<sup>1</sup> The dispute arose originally about cod-fishing, but in the last quarter of the nineteenth century there was a fresh source of friction over lobster catching, and questions



## 2. Australia and New Zealand

A distinguished historian has said that just as the great fact in the history of England during the eighteenth century was the rise of the United States, so the great fact in the history of England in the nineteenth century was the progress of Australia. And certainly that progress was extraordinary. A Spanish admiral in 1606 was, perhaps, the first European to sight the coast of Australia.<sup>1</sup> In the course of the same century Dutch seamen explored its western shore and also discovered Tasmania, whilst at the end of it came the voyage of the famous English buccaneer, Captain Dampier. But not till 1770, when Captain Cook, after exploring New Zealand, sailed along 2000 miles of the more fertile east coast, were its possibilities for European settlement realized.<sup>2</sup> Eighteen years later, in 1788—the year before the French revolution broke out—the first British expedition arrived at Port Jackson and laid the foundation of the colony of New South Wales. Some of the early settlers were prisoners transported by the British Government; but it must be remembered that in those days the penal code was very severe (p. 607), and many persons were transported for the most trivial offences, whilst others were political prisoners whose views were too advanced for the Government of that day; and before long, moreover, what undesirable elements existed were completely swamped by the number of free settlers who arrived. The colony, like other colonies, had its initial difficulties; but in 1797, Macarthur, by buying at the Cape some of the merino sheep which the King of Spain had presented to the Dutch Government, laid the foundation of the gigantic wool industry of Australia;

Early settlements in Australia.

arose as to whether a lobster was a fish and whether canning a lobster was the same thing as drying a fish, the French answering in the affirmative to both the questions, as French citizens were allowed to dry their fish on parts of the shores of Newfoundland. Later, a dispute arose with the United States as to what constituted "a bay", as its citizens were allowed to fish within three marine miles of any "bay".

<sup>1</sup> His name was de Torres, and he sailed through the straits which bear his name. But of course he no more realized that he had discovered Australia than Columbus realized that he had discovered America, and the strait was not called after him till the end of the eighteenth century.

<sup>2</sup> Cook, the son of an agricultural labourer, first came into notice through his successful pilotage of the British fleet up the St. Lawrence in 1759 (p. 472). His primary duty in his famous expedition was astronomical—to observe the transit of Venus in the Pacific—and this being accomplished he proceeded on his famous voyage of discovery.



whilst, later on, various discoveries enabled the colony to develop beyond the Blue Mountains, which at first seemed definitely to check its progress westward.

Gradually other colonies were formed out of the original territories of New South Wales. In Tasmania the first settlement was made in 1803. South Australia, as its capital, Adelaide, suggests, was founded in the reign of William IV. Victoria, whose capital, Melbourne, seems to perpetuate the happy connection of the Queen and her first Prime Minister, became a separate colony in 1851; and Queensland followed suit eight years later. Meantime the first settlement was made in the west in 1829, and developed into the colony of West Australia. In the early fifties came the discoveries of gold in New South Wales and Victoria, which led to an enormous immigration; and this was very shortly followed by the grant of self-government to nearly all the colonies (1855). To describe the later development of Australia requires a book to itself, and all we can note is that in 1900 the various provinces were federated together and became the *Commonwealth of Australia*.

The two islands of New Zealand were annexed by Great Britain in 1840. There were severe hostilities for some time with the natives, the *Maoris*, who fought cleverly and bravely behind their fortified stockades. The country prospered as a British colony, and self-government was granted to it in 1855, and fifty years later it became the *Dominion of New Zealand*. In its government and policy it is perhaps the most democratic country in the British Empire.

### 3. South Africa

From the Dominion of New Zealand we turn to South Africa, which is also a self-governing Dominion. The *Cape of Good Hope* was first discovered by the Portuguese in 1486. At first it was regarded merely as a port of call on the way to the Far East, and it was chiefly because of its value as a halfway house to their Eastern possessions that the Dutch established a station there in 1652. The Dutch, however, then began to settle in Cape Colony, and at the close of the seventeenth century these Dutch settlers were reinforced by



Huguenot exiles from France. In the last years of the eighteenth century, when Holland was occupied by the French, Great Britain captured and held Cape Colony, but she gave it back at the Peace of Amiens in 1802. Later on, <sup>Early History of Cape.</sup> however, Great Britain recaptured it, and in 1814 her title was formally recognized, on a certain sum being paid for its purchase.

In order to make the complicated story of South Africa subsequent to 1815 clearer, three points should be borne in mind. In the first place, Great Britain for some time, like Holland in former years, regarded the Cape chiefly as <sup>Position after 1815.</sup> a halfway house to India, as a place where ships bound for India could obtain water and victuals. She was jealous of retaining exclusive control over the sea borders of South Africa, but she was extremely reluctant to increase her territory or her responsibilities in the interior; she was anxious, indeed, to draw in the horns of Empire rather than to extend them.

Secondly, the Dutch at the Cape, or *Boers* as they came to be called, had altered little in character since their first settlement in the country. Upon them, as with the Puritans of the seventeenth century in England, whom indeed they resembled in many respects, it was the teaching in the Old Testament rather than that in the New that had the greater hold. They had the same intense conviction as the Puritans that God was with them in all their decisions, and the supreme self-confidence and self-righteousness that such a conviction engendered. And the rugged, obstinate, simple Boer farmer, incurably suspicious of everything new, and ardently tenacious of his rights, had little in common with the eager sympathies, progressive ideas, and, it must be added, the somewhat ignorant sentimentality which characterized a large portion of the British public during the nineteenth century.

Thirdly, there was an enormous coloured and semi-barbarous population in South Africa; part belonged to the *Hottentot* race, but the great majority of tribes, such as the *Kaffirs*, *Zulus*, and *Basutos*, belonged to the race of the *Bantus*. Even at the present time, in the territories comprising the *Union of South Africa*, the *Kaffirs* outnumber the people of European descent by nearly *five to one*, and, of course, a hundred years previous to the *Union* the disproportion was much greater, the total number of



Europeans in South Africa in 1815 being only some thirty thousand.

It was the native question which first produced friction between Boer and Briton. Allusion has already been made to the growth of humanitarian sentiments in Great Britain during the nineteenth century. It was natural that these sentiments should affect the opinion of Great Britain as to the relations which ought to exist between the white and coloured races. Gradually it was felt that slavery and the slave trade could continue no longer in British territories. Great Britain, owing largely to the influence of Wilberforce, had made a beginning, in 1807, by prohibiting the slave trade, the horrors of which it is impossible to exaggerate; and at the Congress of Vienna (1814) she had persuaded the other European nations to follow her example. In 1833 Great Britain went a step further and prohibited slavery in the British dominions. The British planters in the *West Indies* were the chief people affected by this law. They had hitherto depended upon the slaves who had been exported at various times from Africa for the working of the sugar plantations. To compensate them for their loss a sum of twenty millions was voted to them by the British Parliament. At the same time the slaves were to remain for a period of years as apprentices to their old masters. But the apprentice system was a failure, and led to the complete emancipation of the slaves in 1838. There was considerable friction between the Jamaican planters and the British ministry over this and other questions, which finally led to the suspension of the Jamaican constitution (1839).

But the Dutch at the Cape also possessed slaves, chiefly imported from the Malay States and parts of Africa, and they were affected by the law of 1833. They received compensation, it is true, but only to about one-third of the real value of their slaves. The abolition of slavery, however, did not so much rankle in the Dutch mind as the conferment, five years previously, in 1828, upon the native races in Cape Colony of the same political rights as Europeans possessed. The natives were regarded by the Boers as belonging to an inferior race, and so destined to be for all time hewers of wood and drawers of water for the white race. Besides, their

The abolition of slavery, 1833.

The native question at the Cape.



numbers and turbulence made them a constant source of danger to the colonists, and the Boer treatment of them, though perhaps not often unjust, was not tempered with much mercy. Many people in Great Britain, on the other hand, looked upon the natives as peaceful tribes persistently bullied by the Boers, a belief due in a large measure to the reports of British missionaries in South Africa.

It was this difference in view, besides other smaller grievances, that led, in 1836, to what is known as the *Great Trek*. A large number of Boers, with their wives and children, their rifles and their Bibles, their oxen and wagons, left Cape Colony and went north and east to seek some place where they would be left in peace to do as they pleased. In ten years' time it is said that as many thousands of people departed from British territory. Some went across the mountains into *Natal*, in which district a few British emigrants had already settled; but when the Boers tried to reach the sea coast the British Government was alarmed, and in 1843 Natal was annexed to the Empire. The Boers resisted, and on their failure many left the colony. In the years to come Natal was settled chiefly by British colonists, and became predominantly British in race and sentiment. Other Boers settled in the land between the Orange and the Vaal rivers. After a time this was also annexed by Great Britain, but in 1854 the independence of the Boers in that country was recognized by Great Britain, and the land became known as the *Orange Free State*, having its capital at Bloemfontein. Other Boers, again, went even farther north beyond the Vaal River, and their independence was also recognized, in 1852, by Great Britain under what is known as the Sand River Convention. The country which they inhabited was called the *Transvaal*, and its capital, before long, was Pretoria.

The Great  
Trek, 1836.

The Boers in the Transvaal and the Orange Free State fondly hoped that they were free from British interference; and indeed the British Government had no desire for any responsibility beyond the Orange River. Circumstances, however, forced the British boundary forward. Hostilities between the Orange Free State and the Basutos caused the British Government to declare *Basutoland* a British protectorate in 1868. The discovery of diamonds near what is now known as

Basutoland  
and  
Kimberley.



*Kimberley*, led to an enormous rush of people, chiefly of British origin, and the British Government, to preserve order and protect the interests of their own subjects, annexed the whole country round Kimberley, to the great disappointment of the two Republics, who thought they had a better claim to it (1871).

Meantime, in Cape Colony itself considerable progress had been made. About 1820 a great many British immigrants arrived, and settled, for the most part, in the eastern part of the colony round *Grahamstown*. Periodic hostilities with the Kaffirs—there were no less than five wars between 1815 and 1878—led to the territories of Cape Colony being extended up to the Orange River. As the colony prospered, both Dutch and British colonists demanded more control of the government; they obtained partial control in the fifties, while in 1872 Cape Colony became self-governing.

Progress of  
Cape Colony,  
1815-72.

The thirty-two years preceding the Union of South Africa, from 1877 to 1909, were years crowded with incidents, and these were the subject of such acute controversy that it is difficult to explain them clearly in brief outline. The first of these incidents was the annexation of the Transvaal in 1877. The Transvaal had not prospered since its independence had been recognized. Divided leaders and an empty exchequer had paralysed its government. Its weakness had become a danger to the whole European population in South Africa, more especially as it was on the verge of war with the natives on its boundaries, and such a war, if successful for the natives, as it might have been, would have unsettled all the tribes elsewhere. Under these circumstances a British Commissioner, who had been sent out with full powers, decided to annex the Transvaal to the British dominions, and his decision was supported by the Home Government.

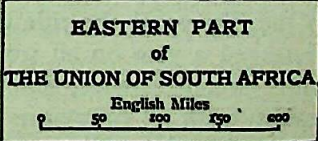
Annexation of  
Transvaal, 1877.

This annexation had two effects. In the first place, it angered the Zulus who bordered on the Transvaal. They had been organized by *Cetewayo*, and possessed forty thousand warriors, and they had hoped to invade the Transvaal.

Zulu War,  
1879.

The relations between the British and Zulus had hitherto been friendly; but, in the imagery of the latter, the English cow, as the result of the annexation, had neglected her own calf—Zululand, and was giving milk to a strange calf—the Transvaal. Various







disputes led finally to war in 1879. The British suffered a disaster at Isandhlwana, where a detached force was surrounded and killed almost to a man; but this was followed by a British victory at Ulundi and the capture of Cetewayo, which led to the submission of the Zulus.

The second result of the annexation was the rising of the Transvaal Boers. The great majority had been opposed to the incorporation of the Transvaal in the British dominions, but it is improbable that any rising would have taken place if the British Government had carried out its expressed intention of granting self-government. Instead of that, both the ministry of Disraeli and that of Gladstone, which succeeded it, pursued a policy of what has well been termed "loitering un wisdom", and nothing was done. Then suddenly, in 1881, the Boers rose. The British commander had only been in the country five months, and with a "scratch" force of one thousand two hundred men had to attempt the release of some isolated garrisons in the Transvaal. He underestimated the fighting capacity of the Boers and the strength of their position near *Laing's Nek*, and he was repulsed in two attempts to dislodge them. Then came the crowning disaster. The Boers, attacking in their turn, stormed *Majuba Hill*, a hill with a top like a saucer, the rim of which was held by part of the British forces; they forced the British back from the rim into the basin below, with the result that the British general was killed, and the defenders of the hill either shared his fate or were taken prisoners.

Just before Majuba, Gladstone's Government had been negotiating for a settlement with the Boers; it continued to negotiate after this disaster, and finally agreed to recognize the independence of the Boers, though they were to be under British suzerainty (1881). Three years later, in 1884, the British Government, at the urgent request of the Boers, dropped the title of "suzerain power" and accorded to the Transvaal the title of *South African Republic*, though it preserved a veto on all treaties which the republic might make with foreign powers, and insisted on freedom of trade and residence for all Europeans (1884). By the same convention the boundaries of the Transvaal were strictly defined.

There now arose in South African history two remarkable

The First  
Boer War,  
1881.

Boer independence  
recognized, 1881.



personalities—Paul Krüger and Cecil Rhodes. *Paul Krüger* as a boy of ten had taken part with his parents in the Great Trek, and as a boy of thirteen in 1838 had fought in a famous battle against the Zulu King Dingaan—an anniversary still commemorated by the Boers as Dingaan's Day. "I have not had much schooling," he once said. "When I was ten years old I had to begin fighting for my life in my country, and since then I have been busy with few intervals." But one book he did know, the *Bible*, and especially the Old Testament. From 1883 till the end of the century he was President of the South African Republic, looking upon himself like a prophet of old "chosen by God to guide his people in the ways of righteousness and safety".<sup>1</sup>

*Cecil Rhodes*, the son of an English clergyman, had to go to South Africa for his health when a boy, but was well enough later to go to Oxford, though he spent the long vacations each year in South Africa. Before long he began to take an active share in gold and diamond mining; it was largely due to him that the great diamond amalgamation was formed in South Africa, and he became a very rich man. He took to politics, and from 1890 to 1896 he was Prime Minister of Cape Colony.

The ideals of Krüger and of Rhodes were quickly to come into conflict. Krüger had visions of a Boer Empire which might dominate South Africa. Rhodes, on the other hand, had hardly passed his "teens" before he was seized by the desire that Great Britain should be supreme in South Africa—indeed Rhodes dreamt of an Africa "from the Cape to Cairo" under British control.<sup>2</sup> Largely through the efforts of Rhodes the successive attempts of the Transvaal Republic to extend its sway were foiled. Thus the republic's aggression in the west led the

<sup>1</sup> Many tales were told of his prowess; how, for instance, for a wager, he had run for a whole day against the fleetest Kaffir runners—he had started at dawn, been soundly thrashed by his father for disobedience on his visit home for a cup of coffee at midday, had then resumed his race, shot a lion in the course of it, and finally outdistanced all his Kaffir competitors at sunset.

<sup>2</sup> Rhodes and Krüger first met in 1885 when Krüger was sixty and Rhodes just over thirty. Rhodes spoke of Krüger afterwards as "one of the most remarkable men in South Africa, whose own dreams were the same as his own—to extend his country over the whole of the northern interior". Krüger is said to have told his friends, "This young man will cause me trouble if he does not leave politics alone and turn to something else. Well, the racehorse is swifter than the ox, but the ox can draw the greater loads. We shall see."



British Government to declare *Bechuanaland* a British protectorate in 1885; her activity was checked in the east by the British annexation of *Zululand* in 1887, and in the north by the creation in 1889 through Rhodes of the British South Africa Company, which obtained the control of the country now known as *Rhodesia*.

Meanwhile the internal conditions in the Transvaal had been entirely altered by the discovery of the goldfields in 1886. People swarmed into the republic, and the town of Johannesburg sprang into being. In a few years the newcomers outnumbered the Boers. What was to happen? The policy of President Krüger was uncompromising. He imposed various restrictions which hampered the development of the mines, and, at the same time, proceeded to extract from their produce nineteen-twentieths of the taxes which he desired for the administration of the republic. Moreover, by various laws, he practically excluded the newcomers from having a vote or any share in the political control of the country.

The situation, there is no doubt, was an exceedingly difficult one. Between the old-fashioned, conservative, slow-moving Boer farmers in the country, and the bustling, active, somewhat cosmopolitan European gold hunters who lived in the town—*Uitlanders* as they were called—there could be little sympathy. It was natural that the former should be apprehensive of their nationality being stifled by the ever-increasing invasion of the newcomers, and should oppose any concession to them. On the other hand, it was impossible that educated Europeans, who formed a majority of the population and possessed more than half the land and nine-tenths of the wealth, should remain in the position of "helots", subject to the caprice of a government over which they had no control, and which was, in addition, notoriously corrupt.

In 1895 matters came to a head. Preparations were made for an armed rebellion. Cecil Rhodes, who was Premier of Cape Colony, supported the movement. He felt that the position of the *Uitlanders* was intolerable. Moreover, Krüger's policy blocked his great scheme of uniting South Africa; for Krüger tried to detach the republic commercially from the other states in South Africa by favouring in all possible ways the railway to the Portuguese harbour of Delagoa Bay,

The goldfields discovered, 1886.

The Jameson raid, 1895.



thereby rousing great resentment in Cape Colony and Natal. But the movement for rebellion ended in a complete fiasco; its leaders could not agree as to the best policy to be pursued, and gave up the idea. Dr. Jameson, however, who had collected some six hundred horsemen on the eastern frontier of the Transvaal, audaciously invaded the republic at the end of 1895, and had ignominiously to surrender with all his men four days later.

The *Jameson raid* had evil consequences. It led to Rhodes resigning the premiership of Cape Colony—in Rhodes's own words, "it upset his apple-cart"; it embittered feeling between Dutch and British throughout South Africa; it encouraged President Krüger to make elaborate preparations for war; and the collapse of the raid caused the German emperor to send a telegram of congratulation to Krüger which aroused great resentment in Great Britain. Moreover, as the result of the raid, the lot of the Uitlanders became harder instead of easier, and the prospect of remedying the grievances by peaceful means more remote. But Chamberlain, the British secretary of state for the colonies, and Sir Alfred (afterwards Lord) Milner, the British high commissioner at the Cape, were determined that something must be done. Protracted negotiations with Krüger led to no result, and war became inevitable. In October, 1899, Krüger issued an ultimatum, and shortly afterwards war broke out. The Orange Free State threw in its lot with the South African Republic, and Great Britain found herself involved in a formidable struggle, a struggle upon which depended not merely the future political privileges of the Uitlanders, but the existence of the British Empire in South Africa.

It is perhaps not a matter for surprise that the initial successes in the South African War should have gone to the Boers.. They had made secret preparations for some time, whilst the British arrangements were incomplete. The Boers were all born fighters, campaigning in a country the conditions of which were familiar to them, and they possessed a mobility, through all being mounted on hardy ponies, which made them for some time extremely baffling foes for the British forces. Consequently, one Boer force was able to invade Natal and to shut up the British commander, Sir George White, in *Ladysmith*; another invested Kimberley, while a third

The South  
African War,  
1899-1902.



crossed the Orange River and invaded Cape Colony. The British misfortunes culminated in the *Black Week* of December, 1899, when three reverses were suffered in six days: at the Tugela River, where a force trying to relieve Ladysmith was repulsed; at Magersfontein, where a night attack on the Boer positions barring the way to Kimberley failed; and at Stormberg in Cape Colony, where another night attack also failed.

The Boers, however, had made three miscalculations. In the first place, they expected that the Dutch in Cape Colony would join them; but though a certain number did so, the great majority remained neutral. Secondly, they relied on assistance from European powers; but though the sympathies of European peoples, perhaps not unnaturally, were strongly with the Boers, the incontestable superiority of the British navy made any armed intervention too hazardous for any European Government to attempt it. Thirdly, previous experience had caused the Boers to belittle the fighting capacity of the British race and the determination of British statesmen. But Great Britain felt she was on her trial. Regulars and volunteers, militia and yeomanry, were poured into South Africa from Great Britain. The Uitlanders and British in various parts of South Africa formed themselves into corps which did invaluable service. Most significant of all, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand sent volunteer regiments to aid the mother country. By the end of 1900 Great Britain had more than a quarter of a million of armed men in South Africa. Moreover, Great Britain's two most trusted soldiers, *Lord Roberts* and *Lord Kitchener*, were sent out as commander-in-chief and chief of the staff.

The clouds then soon lifted. Lord Roberts relieved Kimberley, and captured at *Paardeberg*, in February, 1900, the Boer force which had previously barred the way. The day following their capture, Ladysmith was relieved. Lord Roberts occupied Bloemfontein in March and Pretoria in June, and both Republics, of which these two places were the capitals, were then annexed to Great Britain.

But the Boers held on with grim tenacity. They had, both before and after the capture of their two capitals, harassed Lord Roberts's communications, captured some of his supplies, and won various small successes. The Boers were excellent guerrilla



fighters; their generals, *Botha* and *De Wet*, were ubiquitous; whilst the ex-president of the Orange Free State, *Steyn*, inspired the Boers with his own untiring zeal. Lord Roberts left South Africa in November, 1900, and then Lord Kitchener, his successor, gradually wore the Boer resistance down. Finally, in June, 1902, peace was made. By its terms the two republics were formally annexed to Great Britain; but the Dutch language was allowed in schools and courts of justice; the question of granting the natives a vote was left to each state to deal with;<sup>1</sup> and self-government was to be granted as soon as circumstances would permit. Boer tenacity.

The war had preserved South Africa for the British Empire, and it also made possible its subsequent union. No power could have acted with greater generosity than Great Britain did after the war. She spent five millions of her own money in resettling the Boers on their own lands, and she pledged her credit for loans amounting to forty millions to assist the new colonies, whilst Lord Milner for nearly three years supervised their reconstruction. At the end of that time representative government was introduced, followed by the grant of full self-government in 1906, only four and a half years after the end of the war—an experiment which, though apparently rash, was justified by its success. British generosity after war.

Meanwhile the movement for the union of the South African States grew quickly. A national convention to consider its practicability began to sit in 1908, and concluded its labours in 1909. A wise spirit of compromise and toleration pervaded all parties and overcame all difficulties. *General Botha* was selected by the Governor, Lord Gladstone (Mr. Gladstone's son), as the first Prime Minister, and in October, 1910, the new *Parliament of South Africa*, representing the four provinces of the Transvaal, the Orange Free State, Cape Province, and Natal, was formally opened by the Duke of Connaught—not the least remarkable of the many remarkable events in South Africa during the past century. The Union of South Africa, 1909.

We have dealt with the story of the self-governing Dominions, and a word may be said in conclusion as to their constitutions

<sup>1</sup> It was settled in the negative.



and their relations to the mother country up till the World War. Each of the five Dominions—Canada, Newfoundland, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa—had (and still has) a Parliament consisting of two houses: the popular chamber, upon whose support the ministry was dependent, and which had the chief control in finance; and the other, called a Senate or Council, consisting either of nominated or of elected members. Every law had to be passed through both these assemblies. The degree of power allowed to the provinces composing Canada, Australia, and South Africa respectively varied; in Australia the provinces were given a great deal of independence, in Canada and South Africa not very much. With regard to their relations to Great Britain, each of the self-governing Dominions had a Governor appointed by the Crown. He played a part in each Dominion similar to that played by the sovereign in Great Britain. He selected the Prime Minister and acted as adviser in times of crisis; in addition to this he had the power of vetoing laws or of referring them to the British Government, though he would only do so if he held that they conflicted with Imperial interests.

Various attempts were made to bring the colonies and the mother country closer together. The first Colonial Conference was held in 1887, and others followed at intervals. They were attended by the Prime Ministers of the various colonies and by representatives of India. Then it was decided that these conferences—Imperial Conferences, as they were to be called—were to be held every four years, the Prime Minister of Great Britain being the ex-officio president, and the first of these "Imperial Conferences" was held in 1911.

The British Empire in 1914 had a population of some four hundred and ten millions. It included twelve and a half million square miles, or, in other words, it was ninety-one times the size of Great Britain and Ireland, and thrice the size of Europe. It comprised one-fifth of the world's surface and over one-fifth of its inhabitants; and it possessed, it is said, nearly ten thousand islands and two thousand rivers. It had helped to develop Great Britain's enormous prosperity; but it had also brought upon Great Britain vast responsibilities. The problems of trade and of defence, and the many problems con-

The  
Dominions  
and their  
government.

The British  
Empire, 1914.



nected with the government of the coloured races, were difficult of solution. Of the history of those problems after the World War, and of the later development of the Self-governing Dominions, something will be said in a later chapter (pp. 765-8).

## LII. The Armed Peace, 1871-1914

The years from 1815 to 1854 had, on the whole, been in European history a period of peace; the years from 1854 to 1871 a period of warfare. During the forty-three years from 1871 to 1914 came another period, on the whole, of peace.<sup>1</sup> During this period there were factors making for greater international order and co-operation. For instance, on the initiative of the Czar of Russia, two Peace Conferences—in 1899 and 1907—were held at The Hague; and though they did not accomplish nearly as much as was hoped, they succeeded in codifying rules with regard to the usages of war, and also in establishing The Hague Court of Arbitration, recourse to which, however, was purely optional. Moreover, the International Postal Union—formed in 1875 and now including nearly all the countries of the world<sup>2</sup>—the greater ease of Railway communications, the co-operation between the different Governments of the world in such matters as Health, the increasingly intimate commercial and financial connections of the world, all helped to bring the countries of the world more closely together. But these factors making for peace were more than balanced by the forces of Nationalism and State-realism—the worship of the State and its interests as the

Peace,  
Nationalism, and  
State-realism.

<sup>1</sup> Of course the Peace periods are only so called because free from great European wars; for between 1815-54 occurred the Greek War of Independence (p. 651) and the various military operations in connection with the revolutions in 1848 (p. 657); whilst from 1871-1914 came the Russo-Turkish War of 1877 (p. 670), the Spanish-American War of 1898, the South African War of 1899 (p. 711), the Russo-Japanese War of 1904 (p. 720), and the Balkan Wars of 1912-14 (p. 722).

<sup>2</sup> The Postal Union established uniformity of postage rates and of units of weight as between the different countries, and definite payments to be paid by one country for the transit of letters through the trains or steamships of another country. The countries comprising the Union deal to-day with some 40,000 million letters.



purpose of every effort<sup>1</sup>—forces which became as powerful as Religion in their influence upon individuals and upon peoples. Hence—especially in the twentieth century—these years after 1871, though in the main a period of peace, were a period of

“Armed Peace”; both the greater and the smaller Powers, as the years progressed, were steadily increasing their armaments and warlike preparations in case war should break out over the various ambitions and ideals of the individual States, ambitions and ideals which might prove, and in fact did prove, to be incompatible one with another.

The most formidable and in many ways the most efficient Power in Europe during these years was the German Empire.

The greatest of the thirty-eight States in that Empire was Prussia, whose king belonged to the House of Hohenzollern. A member of that House, which originally had its home in Southern Germany, had secured in 1415 the Mark or Electorate of Brandenburg, and to that had been added, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, Prussia. The House, in the course of the next three centuries, had steadily increased its possessions, and mainly by war—for war, as a French statesman once said with some truth, “was the chief industry of Prussia”. Thus, *Frederick the Great* (1740-86), King of Prussia, had added Silesia and part of Poland, and in 1815, after the Napoleonic Wars, large territories were acquired on the Rhine. Then *Bismarck*<sup>2</sup> became, in 1862, Chief Minister

<sup>1</sup> “The State, the greater the more so,” said the Political Director of the German Foreign Office in 1899 in connection with the first Hague Peace Conference, “regards itself as an end in itself, not as a means for the attainment of a higher outside aim. For the State there is no higher object than the protection of its interests. These in the case of Great Powers would not be necessarily identical with the maintenance of peace, but much more with the undoing of the enemy and of competitors through a rightly constructed stronger group.”

<sup>2</sup> Bismarck was, in his youth, a typical product of the old Brandenburg Junker Class of landlord aristocracy. At the university he consumed large quantities of beer, and fought twenty-six duels; and in his early political life he achieved prominence in the revolutions of 1848 by the violence of his reactionary and monarchical opinions. He became Chief Minister of the King of Prussia in 1862 during a constitutional crisis when the King wanted the army to be increased and the Parliament did not. Bismarck was uncompromising. “The great questions of the day,” he said, “are decided not by speeches nor by votes of majorities, but by Blood and Iron.” Hence he levied the taxes for four years without passing a budget through Parliament, stopped hostile meetings, and further controlled the liberty of the press. But his success in the three wars referred to made him the idol of the Prussian Kingdom; and was soon to make him the idol of Germany. Here is Disraeli’s description of him at the Congress of Berlin in 1878: “He is 6 ft. 4 in., proportionately stout, with a sweet and gentle voice which singularly and strangely contrasts with the awful things he says, appalling in their frankness and audacity. He is a



Digitized By Siddhanta eGangotri Gyaan Kosha

of Prussia; and in the first nine years of his rule had fought wars with Denmark, then Austria, and finally France, the last one with the help of other German States (pp. 667-9). As a result of Bismarck's "blood and iron" policy, Germany became in 1871 a Federation of 38 States. But in that Federation the King of Prussia was ruler of lands bigger and more populous than those of all the other German States put together, and it was he who became its head as German Emperor.

Germany was now the strongest military Power in Europe; and in Bismarck, her first Chancellor, she possessed the foremost statesman. But Bismarck in 1871 regarded Germany for the moment as a "satiated State". Germany had <sup>Bismarck.</sup> secured Alsace-Lorraine; she had many internal problems to solve; and her trade and industry, which began to make the most prodigious advances, needed a period of quiet for their expansion. Hence Bismarck desired peace; and his policy was chiefly to keep France "without friends and without allies". With that object in view, he succeeded in keeping on friendly terms with Russia and Great Britain, and in making with Austria in 1879 a *Dual Alliance*; whilst in 1882 came the famous *Triple Alliance* of Germany, Austria, and Italy. These Alliances were renewed from time to time, and were in force, with some alterations, in 1914. In 1890, however, Bismarck resigned owing to differences with the young Kaiser, William the Second, who had just succeeded (Table, p. 617).

France, after the war of 1870-1, was in an unenviable position. She had been humiliated by her defeat; she had been shorn at the Peace, as she thought most unjustly, of <sup>France.</sup> Alsace-Lorraine, and thus robbed of any part of the Rhine Boundary;<sup>1</sup> and she had been forced to pay a huge indemnity. Moreover, she was isolated as a result of Bismarck's policy, and lived under constant fear of another German invasion. She made, nevertheless, a marvellous recovery. In two years she had paid off her indemnity; and a few years later she began to develop and expand a large empire in Africa and elsewhere (p. 681-3). Moreover, in 1893 she found an ally. She found that

complete despot here, and from the highest to the lowest all Prussians, and all the permanent Foreign Diplomacy, tremble at his frown and court most sedulously his smile."

<sup>1</sup> "Think of it always, and never speak of it," was the advice of one statesman as to the loss of Alsace-Lorraine.

(c271)

46-47\*



Russia was not unwilling to enter into friendship with her, and in 1893 came the *Dual Alliance* of France and Russia. Europe was therefore now ranged into two camps: the Triple Alliance of 1882 on the one hand, and the Dual Alliance of 1893 on the other.<sup>1</sup> But for many years the two Alliances had little thought of war with one another; they stood, as has been aptly said, side by side not face to face.

What was the attitude of *Great Britain* during these forty years? She pursued at first, according to her traditions, a policy of isolation so far as European politics were concerned. Great Britain. The difficulties she did have were for some time with France and Russia rather than with the members of the Triple Alliance. She was still suspicious of Russian designs in the Near East on Constantinople, in the Middle East on Afghanistan and India, and in the Far East on the Empire of China. We have already seen how nearly she went to war in 1878, and how the crisis was averted at the Congress of Berlin (pp. 669-71). With France again she had occasional difficulties over Egypt and the Sudan. France did not like our "provisional occupation" in 1882 of the former country, in which she had taken a peculiar interest since the time of Napoleon; and our conquest of the Sudan in 1898 (p. 678) conflicted with her ambition of having an empire across Africa from east to west (p. 678, note).

Soon after the beginning of the twentieth century came a change in the policy of Great Britain. Hitherto the relations with Germany had been on the whole friendly Great Britain and Germany. and at times even cordial.<sup>2</sup> But in 1900 Germany

<sup>1</sup> The terms of the various Alliances are now known. Thus the Dual Alliance of 1879 between Germany and Austria was to ensure against an attack by Russia, and provided that if one of the two empires was attacked by Russia, the other should come to its assistance. Italy came into the Alliance because of the French occupation of Tunis, which the Italians themselves wanted, and which, from its position, threatened Sicily; and the Triple Alliance of 1882 was chiefly concerned with France. Thus it provided that if Italy, without direct provocation, was attacked by France, Germany and Austria would help her. Under terms of the Treaty between Russia and France, Russia would help France if she was attacked by Germany, or by Italy and Germany; France would help Russia if she was attacked by Germany, or by Austria and Germany.

<sup>2</sup> Thus in 1879, just before the formation of the Dual Alliance, Bismarck, who had made great friends with Disraeli at the Congress of Berlin, proposed a defensive alliance with Great Britain. The German Ambassador arrived at Hughenden, Disraeli's country seat in Bucks, at 6.30 one evening and made this proposal; but Disraeli gave no decided answer, and nothing came of it. Again, between 1898 and 1901 Chamberlain, the Secretary of State for the Colonies in Lord Salisbury's Ministry, tried to negotiate an alliance with Germany, and in a public speech in 1899 referred to this alliance as the "most natural for Great Britain".



passed a Navy law. As the years progressed, Germany's navy developed till at last it seemed that it might threaten the supremacy of Great Britain on the seas, a supremacy on which in time of war Britain's very existence, owing to her inability to feed herself, would depend. Moreover, Germany had ceased to be a "satiated" State. She wanted to be a world Power and to have, as she called it, "her place in the sun". Of course Germany had as much—or as little—justification as any other European Power in having extra-European ambitions, and, perhaps not unnaturally, resented any trace of a "dog in the manger" policy by others. She had already, as we have seen, secured an Empire in Africa and a position in the Far East. In the twentieth century her ambitions were mainly centred on a railway to be built by German enterprise across Asia Minor to Baghdad. Such a railway, it was feared by many in Great Britain, especially if combined with a political alliance between Germany and Turkey and with the German training of Turkish soldiers, might give Germany the practical control of Asia Minor and Mesopotamia, and even might turn the British flank in the East.<sup>1</sup> Then the speeches of the German Kaiser and the lectures of the German professors, glorifying the German nation and exalting war, all helped to make Great Britain apprehensive and uneasy. Germany, so it appeared to many observers, seemed to be alternately "rattling the sword in the scabbard" to frighten France and Russia, and threatening to "seize the Trident" which would herald the downfall of the British Empire.<sup>2</sup>

The result was that Great Britain, soon after the South African

<sup>1</sup> The difficulty was to distinguish Germany's object. Was the Baghdad Railway, for instance, merely intended to establish Central European influence from the Baltic to Constantinople and thence to the Persian Gulf; or was this influence, once established, to be used as a wedge to split the British Empire? The latter was openly proclaimed in German war literature, after the outbreak of war, to be the German object. As a matter of fact, however, Great Britain succeeded in the 'nineties in making satisfactory arrangements with Germany about spheres of influence in Africa; and with regard to the Baghdad Railway had concluded with Germany and Turkey in June, 1914, a draft agreement which would, if it had been observed, have safeguarded British interests in the Persian Gulf.

<sup>2</sup> For example, here was the opinion of Lord Carnock, who was Permanent Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs from 1910-6, an opinion expressed in 1909 when he was British Ambassador at St. Petersburg. "The ultimate aims of Germany surely are, without doubt, to obtain the preponderance on the continent of Europe, and when she is strong enough, and apparently she is making very strenuous efforts to become so, that she will enter on a contest with us for maritime supremacy. In past times we have had to fight Holland, Spain, and France for this supremacy, and personally I am convinced that, sooner or later, we shall have to repeat the same struggle with Germany."



War was over, emerged from her isolation, and began to form alliances with other Powers. King Edward VII had just succeeded to the throne. His personality attracted the French, and created an atmosphere in which diplomacy could work. Hence in 1904 came a treaty with France by which all differences were settled, the chief provision being that France recognized our special interests in Egypt, whilst Great Britain recognized the special interests of France in Morocco. Then came in the same year, 1904, the Russo-Japanese War. In this war the French sympathies were with Russia, whilst British sympathies were with the Japanese, with whom for some time British feeling had been cordial; and in 1905 Great Britain made with Japan an alliance (renewed in 1911) which aimed at securing peace in the Far East. Then when the Russo-Japanese War was over, the Governments of Russia and Great Britain began to enter into negotiations, and in 1907 an arrangement was made between them. As a consequence, there gradually developed the *Triple Entente*, as it was called, of France, Russia, and Great Britain; but the co-operation was diplomatic rather than military, and Great Britain was not pledged to military support.

Meantime the *Balkans* were again becoming a burning question to three Powers, Austria-Hungary, Germany, and Russia. *Austria-Hungary* was a huge empire, built up through a series of marriages by the House of Habsburg. It was a museum of races; but the three chief were the *Germans* who lived chiefly in Austria, the *Magyars* who lived in Hungary, and various groups of *Slavs*, such as the Czechs in Bohemia and the Poles in Galicia in the north of the empire, and the Slovenes, the Serbs, and the Croats in the south. Austria-Hungary was what was called a Dual Monarchy, and the various countries in it were part either of the Hungarian kingdom or of the Austrian Empire. The former was ruled by the Magyars, who attempted to assimilate all other races to them. The latter was mainly controlled by the German element, and the Austrian Government treated its southern Slavs with a not unkindly indifference. But not unnaturally the Slavs, especially the Southern Slavs, whether in Austria or Hungary, were dissatisfied with their inferior position. To the Southern Slav problem there were three possible solutions. One, and it was that actually pursued



up to the World War by the Austro-Hungarian Government, was to suppress the Slav racial activities and to keep the Germans and the Magyars in the ascendant. Another—a federal solution—was for the Southern Slavs to be given some measure of “Home Rule” under the Habsburg Monarchy; and this was a solution that the heir to that monarchy, the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, is supposed to have favoured. The third solution was for the Southern Slavs to break away altogether from Austria-Hungary and to join with their fellow Slavs in Serbia. This was the Pan-Serb solution; and the one adopted since the war with the creation of Yugoslavia. The centre of the movement in favour of this solution was Belgrade, the capital of Serbia, and there was an extensive propaganda. Moreover, young extremists of this movement were responsible for riots and even for the assassination or attempted assassination of Austro-Hungarian officials. The official relations between Austria-Hungary and Serbia were liable to be uneasy as long as this agitation continued, and Austro-Hungarian statesmen not unnaturally opposed the development of a Serbia whose ambitions were held to threaten the territories of the Dual Monarchy and were largely responsible for the discontent existing there.

But Serbia, if she had an opponent in Austria-Hungary, had a protector in Russia, who, as a Slav Power herself, championed the Slav cause in the Balkans whilst her statesmen looked forward at some future date to the break up of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and to the satisfaction of Serbian patriots' desires.<sup>1</sup> The situation was, however, further complicated because Germany was getting more and more friendly with the Turks, and seemed to be aiming at securing ultimately the political control of Constantinople, an aim which was very displeasing to Russia, who had always regarded herself as its ultimate occupier, and in particular was very anxious to secure free access for her warships to and from the Black Sea by the Straits.

A survey of European conditions in the opening years of the

<sup>1</sup> Thus in 1913 the Russian Foreign Secretary wrote to the Russian Minister in Belgrade: “Serbia's promised land lies in the territory of the present Austria-Hungary.” And in that same year, in advising Serbia to be patient, he said to the Serbian Minister in St. Petersburg: “Time was needed to organize a new Serbia in order that when the time comes the Austria-Hungarian ulcer, which to-day is not so ripe as the Turkish, may be cut up.”



twentieth century shows, then, that there was a good deal of inflammatory material. First, Germany and France were traditional enemies on the Rhine, and Germany, moreover, strongly objected to the French interests in Morocco. Secondly, Germany and Great Britain were becoming rivals on the sea, and Great Britain was anxious about Germany's world ambitions, especially in connection with the Baghdad Railway. Thirdly, Russia and Serbia on the one hand, and Austria and Germany on the other, had conflicting racial interests in the Balkans and in the Straits. Hence came a series of crises—four of them in less than ten years. Twice there was almost war over the Moroccan question: in 1906 when a famous French Foreign Secretary had to retire, and in 1911 when the Germans sent a gunboat to a Moroccan port.<sup>1</sup> The Balkans were responsible for the other two crises. First, in 1908, Russian and Serbian resentment was very strong against Austria-Hungary, because that Power annexed Bosnia and Hercegovina, two provinces which by the Treaty of Berlin in 1878 had been handed over to Austria-Hungary to administer and which were largely composed of Serbs. Secondly, in 1912-3 came fresh Balkan wars. In 1912 Serbia and Bulgaria, Greece and Montenegro combined against Turkey. The Allies, having driven the Turks back to Constantinople and a small district round it, proceeded to quarrel over the division of the spoils. Bulgaria's greed led the other Balkan Powers, including Roumania, to combine against her, with the result that at the treaty of *Bukharest* Bulgaria obtained less than was originally intended.

In 1914 the Balkans were still full of unrest. Russia and Germany were rivals for ascendancy at Constantinople. Russia and Austria-Hungary had rival policies in the Balkan peninsula, and each was suspecting the other of aiming at its hegemony. Russia was working for a League between Roumania, Greece, and Serbia, which would check any advance of Austria-Hungary against Serbia, whilst Austria-Hungary was working for one between Roumania, Greece, and Bulgaria which would isolate Serbia and check her Pan-Serb ambitions. And

<sup>1</sup> In the first case in 1906, M. Delcassé had to retire and a European conference was held at Algieras; in the second, in 1911, the German gunboat *Panther* was sent to Agadir, and eventually, after long negotiations, Germany renounced her claims in Morocco in return for concessions in the French Congo.



then came the event which was the immediate cause of the war.

The Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, had arranged to pay an official visit to Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia, in June, 1914. Bosnia, as has been stated, had, to the great dissatisfaction of Russia and Serbia, been annexed by Austria-Hungary in 1908, and a great many of its inhabitants were Pan-Serbs who wanted all the Southern Slavs to be united together in an independent state. The Archduke's visit took place on Sunday, June 28th, and he was murdered as he drove through the streets. "The world," said Lord Grey, who was our Foreign Secretary when the war broke out, "will presumably never be told all that was behind the murder of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand."<sup>1</sup>

The Serbian Government may possibly have heard something about a plot for the murder, and there is no doubt that some of their army officers and some of their minor civil officials abetted it. But there is no <sup>Serbia and the Plot.</sup> evidence that the Serbian Cabinet itself either desired or encouraged it—in fact, whatever might be its ambitions for the future, it desired peace at that time. But Count Berchtold, the Foreign Minister in the Austro-Hungarian Government, held that the murder was due to the Greater Serbian propaganda; that the time had come when the Pan-Serb agitation for the secession of all territories of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy inhabited by Southern Slavs must be checked; and that the continuance of the Serbian menace threatened the very existence of the Dual Monarchy. He consulted Germany with regard to the elimination of Serbia "as a factor of political power" in

<sup>1</sup> There was a secret and terrorist society, with headquarters in Belgrade, called "The Black Hand", to which some Serbian army officers and perhaps also some minor civil officials belonged, the aims of which society were, by any means, to secure the union of the Southern Slavs; its seal was an unfurled flag, a skull and crossbones, and a dagger, a bomb, and a bottle of poison. Through the agency of various members of this society, including the head of the Intelligence Branch of the Serbian army, three Bosnian youths, all under twenty-one, who had come to Belgrade, were given bombs and pistols, and smuggled, with the help of some minor officials of the Serbian Government, over the frontier back to Bosnia for the purpose of murdering the Archduke. They and four other Bosnians, all armed, were stationed on June 28th at various points along the Archduke's intended route. First a bomb was thrown by one of the three youths at the Archduke, who struck it aside, and it fell in front of the next motor, where it burst and wounded an officer and several onlookers. The Archduke went on to the Town Hall and was received by the Mayor. On the return journey the chauffeur began to take a wrong turning and then, when corrected, put on his brakes to regain the right route; the moment's delay gave another of the youths—Prinsip by name—time to fire with a pistol two shots, one of which killed the Archduke and the other his wife.



the Balkans. The rulers of Germany regarded the maintenance of Austria-Hungary, and of the most powerful Austria-Hungary possible, as a necessity for them. They replied to Germany's Miscalculations. that Austria-Hungary must be the judge of what was to be done to clear up the situation, and that whatever was decided upon, Austria-Hungary could always be sure that she would find Germany on their side. They added that immediate action was desirable. The rulers of Germany in coming to this decision made two terrible miscalculations. In the first place, they thought that the intervention of Russia, though possible, was improbable. In the second place, they felt certain of the neutrality of Great Britain. Both Austria-Hungary and Germany took the gambler's throw, and therein lies their responsibility.

As a consequence of the promise of Germany's support, Austria-Hungary decided on the complete acquiescence of Serbia in an ultimatum which was to be dispatched to her or, if that was not obtained, on a punitive war. The Austro-Hungarian Ultimatum. The ultimatum, "the most formidable document," said Lord Grey, the British Foreign Secretary, "I have ever seen addressed by one State to another that was independent," was presented by Austria-Hungary to Serbia on the 23rd of July.

At once a most serious crisis arose. The Austro-Hungarian Government had only given the Serbians forty-eight hours to reply; it refused to extend this period, and though the Serbian Government gave way on most of the points of the ultimatum, the Austro-Hungarian Minister withdrew from Belgrade and Austria-Hungary prepared for war. Russia, feeling that her position as a great Power was at stake and that the elimination of Serbia as a political factor meant the supremacy of Austria-Hungary in the Balkans, decided to support Serbia. Germany supported Austria-Hungary, and France was bound by her alliance to Russia if hostilities arose.

All the Powers looked to Great Britain for a lead. If Great Britain would only declare her solidarity with Russia and France, said the rulers of those two countries, Germany would force Austria-Hungary to a compromise;<sup>1</sup> if only Great Britain would announce her neutrality,

<sup>1</sup> "If Great Britain took her stand firmly with France and Russia," said the Russian



said the rulers of Germany and Austria-Hungary, Russia would not intervene and the war between Austria-Hungary and Serbia would be "localized", and, after Serbia had been duly "chastised", Austria-Hungary would seek no territorial indemnity. But neither of these things could Lord Grey do. The Cabinet in the earlier stages of the crisis, as has happened before in similar crises, was divided on the subject of intervention, and probably Parliament and public opinion would have been as well. Moreover, Great Britain was primarily interested in a possible Austrian hegemony in the Balkans by how it would affect a possible German hegemony of the world. Grey, however, did make every possible attempt to effect some compromise, and was fertile in suggestion with that object. He proposed a Conference of the Powers not immediately concerned, namely Germany, France, Italy, and Great Britain; he proposed that Austria should occupy Belgrade, and then that the matter should be submitted to mediation; he tried to get Russia and Austria to negotiate directly. But, mainly through the opposition of Germany or Austria for one reason or another, all his attempts failed.

Grey's  
Efforts at  
Compromise.

Then came another complication. The military plans of the various Powers depended on a very delicate time-table; and the plans of Germany especially depended on the superiority in the speed of her mobilization and of her being able to defeat France before Russia was ready. Germany, when at long last she realized that Great Britain would probably not, after all, be neutral, and also learnt the actual terms of the Serbian reply, did make an attempt to press some sort of compromise upon Austria-Hungary, though her previous promises of support to that country made it difficult. But when Russia started to mobilize, as she did, the German soldiers pressed for German mobilization, and with that mobilization war was practically certain. Thus almost in a moment war burst upon Europe. On August 1st, Germany, as an ally of Austria-Hungary, declared war on Russia, who was, by mobilizing her army, supporting Serbia; and two days later Germany declared war on France. Then the Germans, with

War.

Foreign Secretary on the 25th of July, "there would be no war. If Great Britain failed, then rivers of blood would flow and Great Britain would in the end be dragged into war."



a view to carrying out their war plans against France, demanded of Belgium a free passage for troops through that country, notwithstanding the fact that the neutrality of Belgium had been guaranteed in 1839 by the leading European Powers, of which Prussia had been one.<sup>1</sup>

The German demand on Belgium was the direct cause of Great Britain's entry into the war. Up to this point the Government had hesitated what to do in the event of war breaking out. One of the cardinal principles, however, of Great Britain's policy has always been to prevent the coasts opposite her shores being used as a possible basis for hostile attacks—a principle which had led Great Britain into contests with Spain and with France in the past, and which was now to be vindicated once more against a still mightier foe. But much more important, in the consideration of our statesmen in 1914, was the fact that the action of Germany was a most flagrant violation of a European treaty to which both Great Britain and Prussia were partners.<sup>2</sup> On Belgium's appeal for help, all hesitancy on the part of the British Government at last vanished; and at 11 p.m. on August 4th Great Britain entered the war. By August 4th, 1914, therefore, Great Britain, Russia, France, Belgium, and Serbia were in conflict with Germany and Austria-Hungary; Italy remained neutral, as she held that the war waged by Germany and Austria-Hungary was an aggressive war. The War had begun, and before long was to draw in most of the other Powers in the world.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The neutrality of Belgium had been guaranteed in 1839 by Great Britain, Austria, France, Prussia, and Russia; and in 1870, at the beginning of the Franco-German War, Gladstone's Government had made a treaty first with Prussia and then with France providing that if either violated the neutrality of Belgium, Great Britain would co-operate with the other for its defence.

<sup>2</sup> The German Chancellor said to the Reichstag, August 4th: "Gentlemen, that (i.e. the invasion) is a breach of international law . . . the wrong we thereby commit we will try to make good as soon as our military aims have been attained. He who is menaced as we are and is fighting for his all (sein Höchstes) can only consider how he is to hack his way through." The British Prime Minister said to the House of Commons, August 6th: "If I am asked what we are fighting for, I reply in two sentences. In the first place to fulfil a solemn international obligation, an obligation which, if it had been entered into between private persons in the ordinary concerns of life, would have been regarded as an obligation not only of law but of honour, which no self-respecting man could possibly have repudiated. I say secondly, we are fighting to vindicate the principle that small nationalities are not to be crushed in defiance of international good faith by the arbitrary will of a strong and overmastering Power."

<sup>3</sup> The date of entry of the other chief Powers was as follows: On the side of Great Britain and her Allies, Japan, August, 1914; Italy, May, 1915; Portugal in March, Rou-



The feeling in Europe in the years preceding the war had become increasingly tense and feverish. Nationalist feelings were getting stronger and stronger. Armaments were piling up, crises were multiplying, and the ambitions of the various Powers, racial and territorial, European and extra-European, were undoubtedly difficult of adjustment. The responsibility of the war is a very heavy one, but no general agreement by the historians of the various nationalities concerned has yet been reached on the various controversial points connected with it. Did, for instance, the statesmen of Europe "stagger and stumble" into the war, as Mr. Lloyd George once said, or was Nationalist public opinion too strong for rulers to be able to restrain it? Was the Austro-Serbian question one which affected Europe as a whole, and were the rulers at Berlin and Vienna guilty of deliberately trying to impose their own solution of this question by a threat of war and, if other nations refused that solution, by a threat of war immediately declared? What measure of responsibility rests with the Serbian Government? Was the Russian mobilization justified and did it precipitate the war? Did Great Britain fail to prevent war owing to the uncertainty of her policy, or did France stiffen Russia's attitude too greatly? Finally, would a League of Nations, if it had existed, have prevented the war by affording machinery for delay and for publication of the points of view of the different nations? But whether nations or individuals were at fault, or whether circumstances were too strong for them, Europe and the world were plunged into a war which was to cost 9 millions of lives and was to be "incomparably the most frightful misfortune for mankind since the collapse of the Roman Empire before the Barbarians".

The  
Responsibility  
of the War.

mania in August, and Greece in November, 1916; United States, 1917; China, Brazil, Montenegro, San Marino, Panama, Cuba, Siam, Liberia, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Haiti, and Honduras also joined against the Central Powers. On the side of the enemy, Turkey, November, 1914; Bulgaria, October, 1915.



## LIII. The World War, 1914-8.

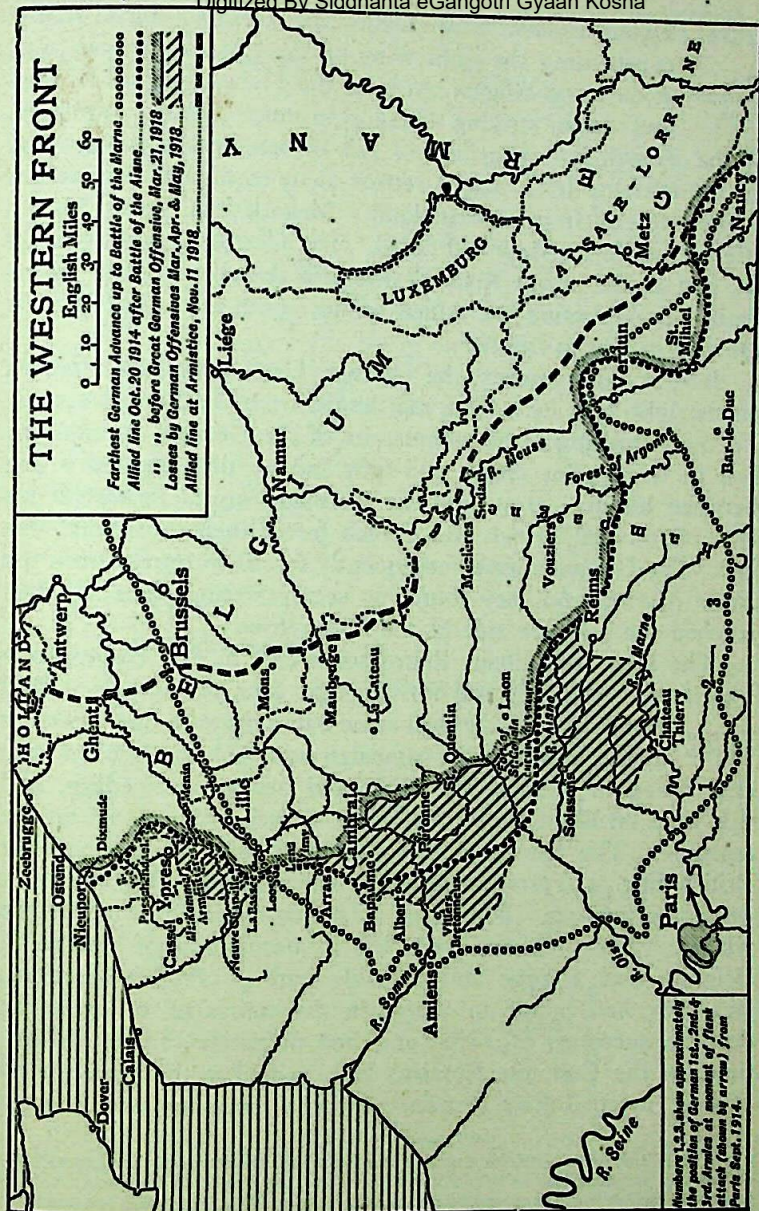
The World War was fought on a scale unapproached in any previous century. For the first time, "Nations in Arms" fought one another. Instead of tens of thousands, millions faced one another—altogether the war saw the employment of no less than 50 millions of armed men. Moreover, not only were old weapons transformed and multiplied beyond measure,<sup>1</sup> but the war was fought in new elements and with new weapons. War in the air and under the water was developed enormously. Air forces—aeroplanes or airships or balloons—were used, for instance, for scouting and for obtaining information, chiefly by means of photography, of the hostile dispositions; for assisting artillery by checking and registering; for bombing hostile forts and railway stations; and for attacking the enemy on the march. The under-the-water weapons, again, as we shall see, transformed the conditions of naval warfare. As the war progressed, weapons became more and more deadly and diabolical. Hand-grenades, gas, artificial fog, liquid fire, and tanks were all gradually brought into operation. The result was that the strain on men's nerves in the later stages of the war was of a kind incomparable with that in any previous warfare.

The Germans had to fight on two fronts, on the *West* against France and Great Britain, and on the *East* against Russia. As the French were quick to mobilize, and the Russians slow, the German plan at the opening of the war was to concentrate two-thirds of their army in the West, and to "knock out" France before Russia was ready or many British troops could be sent across the Channel. But the Germans thought that no immediate decision was possible on the strongly defended, rather mountainous frontier of 150 miles between France and Germany. Consequently they determined to wheel part of their armies through Belgium, and thus to envelop the left flank of their enemy.

The Germans nearly succeeded. After overcoming the

<sup>1</sup> The British had on the West Front at the beginning of the war 486 guns and howitzers, of which 24 were of medium calibre; at the end they had 6437, of which 2211 were of medium and heavy calibre.







brave Belgian resistance at Liège, the German First Army, constituting the right wing of the German armies, was, at dawn on August 23rd, on the Franco-Belgian frontier and within striking distance, in much superior numbers, of the French left wing and of the British, whose forces were on the extreme left. Rapid retreat alone saved the British and French forces from destruction.<sup>1</sup> Meantime a great French offensive towards Metz had failed. The German armies pressed on, and got across the River Marne with the object not of taking Paris but of driving the Allied armies south-east away from it towards the Swiss frontier.

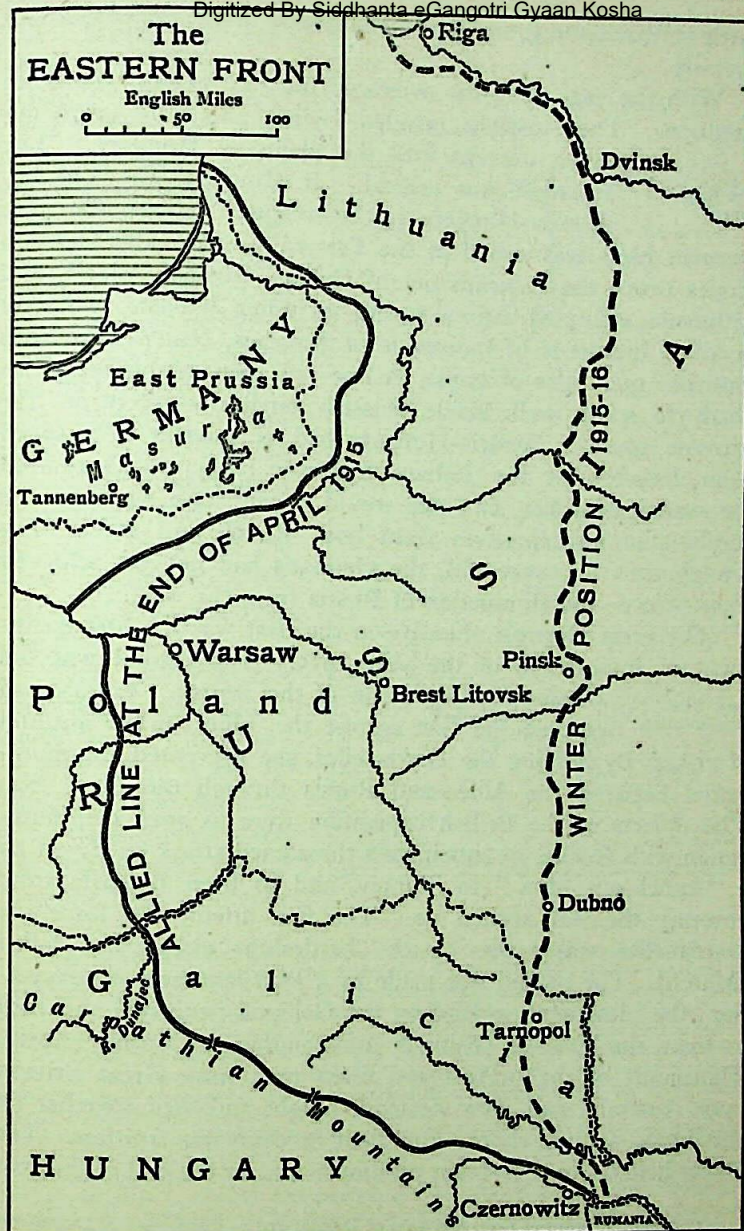
But, at this moment, the German First Army was attacked on its right flank by a force that issued from the French capital. To meet this attack the commander of the German First Army had to weaken his centre and left, and he thus created a gap between his own army and the German Second Army on his left. Combined British and French forces then threatened this gap. The Germans were consequently forced to retreat from the *River Marne*; and they found no secure resting-place till they reached the northern side of the *River Aisne*.

The lines from about Reims south-east to the Vosges were henceforth stabilized, and for the next four years they shifted nowhere by more than some half a dozen miles. Farther north, however, the campaign now took the form of each side trying to outflank the other and neither succeeding, and this went on till at length the flanks of each army rested on the seashore. The Germans then attempted to break through the British line at *Ypres*, an attempt which failed, after the most desperate fighting. Both sides then dug themselves in for the winter. The Germans were left in occupation of nearly all Belgium and a large and valuable part of French territory. But they had hoped to repeat in the campaign of 1914 the decisive successes of 1870—and had definitely failed. Meantime, in the East, the Russians had, to relieve the pressure on France, invaded East Prussia. But the Germans won a great

<sup>1</sup> The British force of 70,000 men was near Mons, but the attack of the Germans was at first not pressed home as they did not know how the British forces stood. On the retreat the British fought a rearguard action at Le Cateau. The British had few machine-guns, but the excellence of their rifle fire inflicted such great damage that the Germans were deceived as to the British strength.



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battle at Tannenberg, and the Russians were driven out of German territory.

With the year 1915 the events in the *East* occupy the chief attention. The Russians invaded Galicia and were preparing for a descent into the plains of Hungary. The situation was critical. If Hungary was invaded, Austria-Hungary might collapse. Hence the next German blow was aimed at the Eastern Front. The German armies drove the Russians out of Galicia, Russian Poland, and Lithuania, occupied various towns, including *Warsaw*, and took or killed hundreds of thousands of Russians, besides capturing immense quantities of guns. A line was then established from north to south well inside Russian territory—except in the extreme south.<sup>1</sup> Austria-Hungary had as a result been saved from disaster—for the Italians had now (May, 1915) entered the war against her, and she would hardly have survived the combination of offensives from both Russia and Italy. But though thus far successful, the Germans had not yet achieved their object—the elimination of Russia from the war.

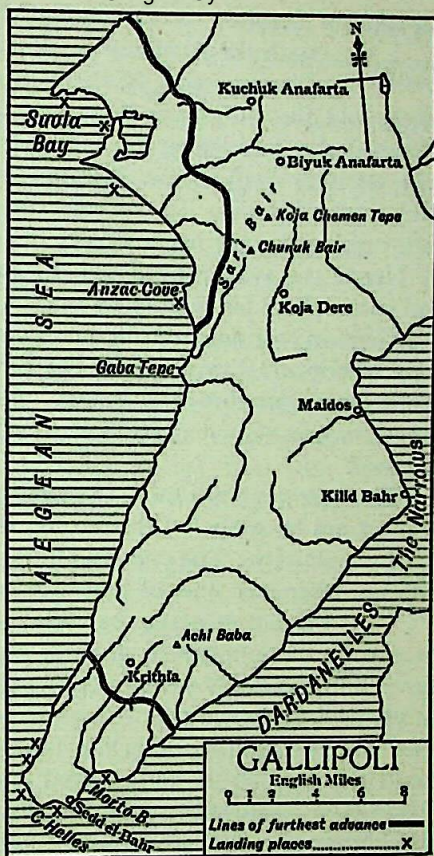
The great German offensive in the East was the first movement of importance in the year 1915. The second was the *Dardanelles* expedition of the British. Turkey had entered the war against the Allies in the autumn of 1914. By holding the Dardanelles, she prevented communication between the Allies and Russia through the Black Sea. The objects of the British expedition were to open communication with Russia, to anticipate a threatened attack on Egypt by a “knock-out blow” to Turkey, and to keep Bulgaria from entering the war against us. The first attempt to force the Dardanelles was made by the battleships alone, and failed (March). The second was made by a joint land and sea expedition, the idea being to land on the Gallipoli peninsula and then to force the Turkish positions commanding the Straits (April). Thousands of the bravest and finest men from Great Britain, from Australia and New Zealand, fought and died together on that blood-stained shore. But their heroism was fruitless. The Turks held on to their main positions: and by the end of the year

<sup>1</sup> The line ran south of Riga, just west of Dvinsk, east of Pinsk, west of Dubno and Tarnopol, east of Czernowitz.



the British Government withdrew the troops (December).<sup>1</sup> The British failure at Gallipoli was perhaps the greatest disappointment of the war. Yet the thousands who died there cannot be said to have died altogether in vain. The expedition had put fresh heart into the Russians, it had kept large Turkish forces from being used elsewhere, and it at any rate postponed for five critical months the entry of Bulgaria into the war.

The Gallipoli expedition, however, succeeded only in postponing the entry of Bulgaria into the war. And its entry led to the third great event on the Eastern Front—the oc-



<sup>1</sup> The Peninsula of Gallipoli—in ancient history known as the Thracian Chersonese—is a tongue of land lying between the Aegean Sea and the Straits of the Dardanelles; it is some fifty miles long, and varies in breadth from twelve to three or four miles. It is very hilly on the peninsula, whilst the Asiatic or opposite side of the Dardanelles is flat. After the attack by sea had failed with the loss, owing to floating mines, of one French and two British ships, two big attacks by land were made under Sir Ian Hamilton's leadership. The first was made in April "by the finest body of young men ever brought together in modern times" composed of the Australian and New Zealand soldiers, the 29th Division, and the Royal Naval Division. The attack resulted in the occupation of Cape Helles at the extremity of the Gallipoli Peninsula, and also of a strip of coast farther north at Anzac—so called after the initial letters of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps, who had, in taking it, ninety-six hours' continuous fighting with little or no sleep. The second attack was made in August. Our position at Anzac was extended; and another force landed farther north at Suva Bay, but the attack was not pushed home. The evacuation was a brilliant success. At Cape Helles, the last place from which the British retired, 17,000 men and 35 guns were withdrawn on the last night between 8 p.m. and 4 a.m.



cupation of Serbia. So far Serbia had more than held its own with the Austrians. But in the autumn of 1915 the German and Austrian armies attacked it from the north, and the Bulgarians from the east, and completely overwhelmed the Serbian army. All Serbia was occupied, and the only territory held in the Balkans by the Allies was a strip of land round Salonika, the Greek port, which was hastily seized as a base for future operations.<sup>1</sup>

Hence the year 1915 closed in the East badly for the Allies and successfully for their enemies. The fall of Serbia had opened the German corridor from Berlin to Constantinople and thence to Asia Minor and Egypt, whilst the British had failed to establish their communications with Russia.<sup>2</sup> Nor had the British met with greater success in an expedition which they undertook in *Mesopotamia*.

The year 1915 saw most movement on the Eastern Front, but it must not be supposed that on the *Western Front* there was less activity. The opposing lines of trenches, and in front of them the lines of barbed wire, ran all the way from the Belgian coast to the Alps. Sometimes these opposing lines were some hundreds of yards away from each other, sometimes they were only some forty or eighty yards or even less—and in places they remained in the same position for nearly four years. For the whole length of this line hundreds of thousands of soldiers faced one another, or rather lived underground in trenches and “dug-outs” in conditions of appalling discomfort, especially in the winter when the trenches were full of mud and water. Fighting was incessant. Night raids, bombings, air-fighting, artillery duels took place nearly all along that vast front. Moreover, at various times during 1915 large offensives took place on either side; but they did not result in any considerable change of position.

We now come to the year 1916. In the West, Germany

with total casualties of one man hit by a stray bullet, one broken leg, and one sprained ankle.

<sup>1</sup> The remnants of the Serbian army escaped to Albania. They found refuge in Corfu, were refitted, and in a few months made an admirable little force which was, under Marshal Mischitch, to do splendid service on the Salonika Front.

<sup>2</sup> Hence the communications remained as before, either through Siberia from the Pacific coast, or by the White Sea, the latter route being only practicable at certain periods of the year.



attempted, in February, a great offensive at *Verdun*. She hoped this would break France, and thereby "knock England's best sword out of her hand". The attack began at the <sup>1916,</sup> end of February, and it went on with little intermission till the end of June. But, with unconquerable heroism, the French held on till Verdun was finally relieved by the attacks of their Allies elsewhere.<sup>1</sup>

The first of these Allied reliefs came from Russia. The Austrians, in order to launch their offensive against Italy, to which we have referred, had weakened their front against Russia. At the beginning of June the <sup>1916,</sup> *Russian* forces, under General Brusilov, attacked on the southern half of the long Eastern Front, and went through the weakened Austrian line like paper. The result was that the Germans had once again to hurry troops from the Western Front to prevent complete disaster for their Austro-Hungarian allies.

Then at the beginning of July the Anglo-French—but mainly British—forces launched a huge offensive on both sides of the *Somme*. For five months the attacks continued with little intermission and on a scale which far exceeded <sup>1916,</sup> all other offensives as regards the number of men <sup>The Somme</sup> and amount of material employed. The amount of ground actually acquired was not nearly commensurate with the expenditure of men and munitions; and every yard was only gained as a result of bitter and intense hand-to-hand fighting. But as a result the German war machine was strained almost to breaking-point; and the loss of men and the expenditure of material the Germans sustained may possibly be held to have justified this long-prolonged agony of fighting.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Verdun's defence is, for the French, the epic of the war. The desperate holding of the underground chambers of the fort of Vaux—one of the forts defending Verdun—during seven days and nights of continual fighting, in the last two of which the defenders had not one drop of water; the prolonged battles round the fort and village of Douaumont; the wonderful organism for revictualling by means of lorries—1700 daily each way—along the "sacred way" leading to Verdun, make up a wonderful story. Over 400,000 Frenchmen laid down their lives in defence of Verdun—and every yard of the district witnessed the devoted heroism of some French soldier. Two of the orders of the day are historic. The first was that of General Pétain on April 10th, after one of the fiercest of the German attacks: "Courage. On les aura." The second was General Nivelle's on June 23rd, when the position seemed desperate—"L'heure est décisive. Vous ne les laisserez pas passer, mes camarades."

<sup>2</sup> The whole of the district included in the fighting was completely shell-holed, and



The Russian was the first, and the Franco-British the second of the Allied offensives in 1916. A third began in August when the *Italians*, thrusting towards Trieste, made an attack across the *Isonzo* (see map on p. 743). The German pressure at Verdun could no longer, in face of these offensives, be maintained; and before the end of the year the French by two vigorous attacks had recovered much of the ground which they had lost.

1916,  
Italian  
Offensive.

In the East, however, the year ended once again gloomily for the Allies. *Roumania* came into the war on the side of the Allies at the end of August, and at once took the offensive in Transylvania. But meantime Hindenburg and Ludendorff, who had made their reputations in the eastern fighting, had succeeded to the control of the German army.<sup>1</sup> They first checked the Russian advance, and then planned with Austria-Hungary an offensive against the Roumanians which led before the end of the year 1916 to the fall of Bucharest, the capital of Roumania, and to the conquest of Wallachia, which comprised two-thirds of that country.

1916,  
Roumanian  
Downfall.

We must now turn from the war for a moment to consider what was happening in Great Britain and the Empire. The first task of Great Britain was to build up an army. We had at the beginning of the war a highly-trained force of regulars and the Territorials, who did yeoman service. But a force of under three-quarters of a million was patently insufficient for a world war. *Lord Kitchener*, who had been made Minister of War on the outbreak of hostilities, had the foresight to see that the war would last at least three years. He inspired such confidence and enthusiasm in the country that, literally, millions of volunteers came freely forward at his bidding to form the "New Armies"—armies which bore a large part of the fightings on the Somme against troops considered to be the

The British  
Empire.

there was no even walking anywhere. The woods became mere stumps of trees, and of the villages not one single trace remained. The views on the Somme fighting of Ludendorff, the real German commander after August, 1916, are worth quoting: "The strain in physical and moral strength was tremendous, and divisions could only be kept in the line for a few days at a time. They had to be frequently relieved and sent to recuperate on quiet fronts."

<sup>1</sup> Hindenburg was Chief of Staff, but much of the work was done by Ludendorff. The latter gradually concentrated into his own hands the control of strategy on every front, whether German or Austrian, Bulgarian or Turkish.



best-trained in Europe. But even these volunteers were not enough; and in January, 1916, Great Britain adopted the principle of conscription.<sup>1</sup> Great Britain could also, however, rely on the Dominions and on her dependencies to help her. From every sea and from every continent she gained recruits; and the achievements of Canadians, Australians, and New Zealanders in Gallipoli and on the Western Front, of the South Africans in Delville Wood, on the Somme, and elsewhere, and of the Indian troops in Mesopotamia and Palestine are amongst the most memorable of the war. The contribution of Great Britain and the Empire was growing throughout the war; and the total number of enlistments in the British Empire, including those serving in 1914, was altogether over 8½ millions of men.<sup>2</sup>

Lack of *munitions*, however, was a difficulty as great as lack of men. Our early attacks showed the need of an unending supply of shells; and in the summer of 1915 a Ministry of Munitions was created, and the industries of Great Britain became one vast workshop to satisfy the needs, naval and military, not only of the British but of their Allies.<sup>3</sup>

Meantime came a change in the Government at home. *Asquith's* Government became in May, 1915, a Coalition Government, representing the three chief parties, Liberal, Unionist, and Labour. But in the autumn of 1916 Asquith resigned. He was succeeded by *Mr. Lloyd George*, who formed a small war Cabinet—without departmental functions—whose duties were to attend to the war; and of those who were members at various times perhaps the most interesting was *General Smuts*, our skilful foe in the South African War and afterwards for a time Prime Minister of South Africa.

The crisis of the war compelled the Englishman to give up some of his traditional liberty. Conscription robbed him, for his country's sake, of his right to live. And the civilians at home had to submit more and more to State control. All great in-

<sup>1</sup> In July of the same year, Lord Kitchener, whilst on his way to Russia, was drowned.

<sup>2</sup> The Self-governing Dominions' figures are as follows (the first figure shows the number enlisted, the second the number sent oversea): Canada, 619,000 and 418,000; Australia and Tasmania, 417,000 and 330,000; New Zealand, 222,000 and 100,000; South Africa, 136,000 and 74,000.

<sup>3</sup> At the time of the armistice 2,300,000 men and 900,000 women were employed on munitions. On one day of the British offensives in 1918, nearly 950,000 shells weighing 40,000 tons were fired—a larger quantity than was fired throughout the two and a half years of the South African War.



dustries, such as shipping, mines, and railways, were supervised by the State. And, gradually, not only was the supply of articles of food organized, but even the amount that each citizen should be allowed to eat was rationed. Inevitably, also, there had to be the most rigorous censorship of the press, and suspected persons could be kept in prison without any form of trial.<sup>1</sup> Of course the State made, in undertaking all these functions, many mistakes; but, on the whole, it is wonderful that it did not make more.

The year 1916 saw not only great offensives in east and west, not only the adoption of conscription in Great Britain, but also the only great battle at sea during the war; and here we **Duties of Navy.** may appropriately say something about the navy. For, as ever in British warfare, the activities of our navy were all important. The navy, apart from its *main* duty of watching the enemy's fleet, had many duties to perform. *First*, it had to protect the shores of Great Britain from German raids or invasions. A few raids were made, as for instance on Lowestoft and Scarborough, but the Germans were able to make no attempt at invasion.

*Secondly*, the navy had to transport and convoy all the soldiers and munitions and supplies of all sorts to the many fields of war—twenty million men were conveyed to and from France alone during the four years of war, and without the loss of a single soul.

*Thirdly*, the navy had to sweep the enemies' merchant flags from the sea, and to strangle their foreign trade. The strangulation of their trade and the stoppage of their imports were among the most important of the factors which brought about the final downfall of the enemy Powers.

*Fourthly*, the British navy had to protect and encourage British and Allied commerce. Great Britain's very existence depended upon her imports—and if the navy had failed, Great Britain would have been starved into surrender in a few weeks.<sup>2</sup> At the beginning of the war the navy had to stop hostile cruisers escaping from German ports, and to clear the seven seas of the cruisers already there.<sup>3</sup> Later the navy, in their protection

<sup>1</sup> All the various regulations were issued under the Defence of the Realm Act, familiarly known as D.O.R.A.

<sup>2</sup> Two-thirds of the food-stuffs eaten in the United Kingdom came from abroad, all the cotton and three-fourths of the wool; and the available supplies in the United Kingdom, at any one time, would not have lasted more than five or six weeks.

<sup>3</sup> At the opening of the war there were five German cruisers in the Pacific. These



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of commerce, had to meet a more formidable menace in the submarine—but of that we shall say something shortly.

The paramount duty of the navy, however, on which all else depended, was the *fifth*. This was to look after the German High Seas Fleet, to confine it to port, and to bring it—or any portion of it—to action if it put to sea. That was the business of our Grand Fleet, in the first two years of the war under the command of Admiral Jellicoe<sup>1</sup> (till Nov. 1916), and later under that of Admiral Beatty. But, of course, the conditions of naval warfare since our last great sea fight in Nelson's time were in many ways altered. It was not only that steam or oil-driven ironclads had displaced sailing vessels, or that the vessels themselves were much larger, and the range of their guns enormously extended.<sup>2</sup> For entirely new factors had been introduced. One was the underwater torpedo, discharged either from a submarine or a destroyer or a battleship. Another was the mine, laid under the sea, which exploded when brought into contact with a ship. Our battle fleet had always to beware of being drawn over prepared minefields, and the torpedo, with its extreme range of 15,000 yards, was still more to be feared. Again, in the old days, ships could not slip away unperceived except in a fog or at night—but artificial smoke screens enabled a modern fleet to disappear.

The British fleet could no longer, under the new conditions, be kept, as in past ages, outside the enemies' ports. For the greater part of the war it was either in Scapa Flow or <sup>1916,</sup> the Firth of Forth; and when it did come out, it <sup>Jutland.</sup> had to be protected and flanked by large numbers of destroyers and by cruisers, and often preceded by mine-sweepers. Although there were minor actions, for nearly two years the British Grand

destroyed, off Coronel in Chile, two British ships of an inferior squadron. The Admiralty immediately dispatched two battle cruisers to the Falkland Islands. The day after their arrival the five German ships, unaware of danger, appeared; and before evening they were all, except one, at the bottom of the sea. Of the other German cruisers the *Emden* had the greatest fame; her greatest exploit was to sail with an additional false funnel, so as to resemble a British cruiser, to Penang, an island off the Malay Peninsula, and there to destroy a Russian cruiser and a French destroyer.

<sup>1</sup> "Jellicoe," it has been said, "was the only man on either side who could lose the war in an afternoon." This gives some measure of his responsibilities.

<sup>2</sup> Nelson's flagship, the *Victory*, was of 3400 tons, and its whole broadside only weighed 1160 lb., with a range of 1760 to 2500 yards. The *Iron Duke*, Jellicoe's flagship, had a displacement of 25,000 tons, and could throw a single projectile of 1200 lb., with a range of 18,000 to 20,000 yards.



Fleet and the German High Seas Fleet fought no great battle. But on the last day of May, 1916, came the *Battle of Jutland*—the only encounter of the two main fleets. Poor visibility, perhaps, robbed the British fleet of what appeared to be a splendid chance of victory. As it was, both sides expressed themselves satisfied. The German fleet maintained that, though met by a force superior in the ratio of eight to five, it inflicted twice as much damage as it suffered, and destroyed three British battle cruisers; whilst Great Britain maintained that the German High Seas Fleet was so much battered that never again would it risk another fight.<sup>1</sup>

The German battle fleet had not succeeded in challenging Britain's sea power, and her commerce-destroying cruisers had done comparatively little damage. But the Germans, if they failed on the water, very nearly succeeded in their campaign under the water. With the beginning of 1915 submarines were used by the Germans for commerce destroying. In defiance of all international law and of the dictates of humanity, submarines attacked and sank without warning British and Allied merchant and passenger ships; and the torpedoing of the *Lusitania*<sup>2</sup> especially aroused the horror of the civilized world. The United States protested, and then the Germans made concessions—which they did not observe. At the beginning of 1917 the Germans declared their intention of pursuing *unrestricted* submarine warfare—all ships found in European waters, belonging to whatever nation, would be sunk without warning. The German naval authorities thought that their new policy would bring Great Britain to her knees within six months, and it certainly at first met with startling success. Out of every

<sup>1</sup> The Battle of Jutland resolves itself into four phases. During the first hour, Beatty, with six battle cruisers and four battleships, the latter, however, being some distance away, fought five German battle cruisers which drew on Beatty south towards the main fleet; in this hour we lost two battle cruisers, the *Indefatigable* and *Queen Mary*. During the second hour Beatty, after sighting the German main fleet, retreated north, and he in turn drew the whole German fleet on to Jellicoe's main fleet. In the third phase the German High Seas Fleet, having sighted Jellicoe, in turn retreated S.S.W. Beatty, meantime, had got round the German fleet, and headed the English fleet, which was now east of the Germans. The British and German main fleets had a running fight, some 15,000 to 11,000 yards away, which, but for poor visibility, must have ended in the destruction of the German fleet. Finally, von Scheer, the German admiral, launched an attack with his battle cruisers on Beatty's battle cruisers, and a destroyer torpedo attack on the main fleet of Jellicoe's, who turned away to avoid it; and then, under cover of a smoke screen, the German fleet disappeared west. During the night, the fourth phase, there were destroyer attacks, but von Scheer managed to pass east behind the British main fleet and to escape.

<sup>2</sup> The *Lusitania*, a gigantic Cunard Liner, was sunk off the Irish Coast in May, 1915, with a loss of just on 1200 lives, including 120 citizens of the United States.



100 ships leaving England, 23 never returned, and in April, 1917, the blackest month of all, not far short of a million tons of shipping, British, Allied, and neutral, were sunk, a far greater amount than could be replaced by fresh building.<sup>1</sup>

But the black month of April, 1917, saw also the beginning of the dawn. For it was then that the United States, her patience already exhausted by the breaches of international law and the atrocities previously committed by Germany, determined, as a result of the unrestricted submarine campaign, to enter the war. At once she put her destroyers and battleships, and all her craft, above and below the surface, at the disposal of Great Britain and her Allies.

United States  
enters War, 1917.

Above all, for the next few months American and British ingenuity was engrossed in the task of mastering the deadly peril of the submarine. People at home were rationed in food; home production was increased; shipbuilding was enormously developed. Then there were various methods and devices to overcome or to circumvent the submarine—the convoy system, "mystery ships", "sub-chasers", attacks on the harbours where submarines lurked such as Zeebrugge and Ostend, new types of mines and enormously extended mine-fields all played their part.<sup>2</sup> The result was that by the end of 1917 the submarine had ceased to be a decisive factor in the war, and by March, 1918, the rate at which ships were being built by the Allies was greater than the rate at which the submarine could destroy them.

Submarine  
Failure.

The main interest of the year 1917, as we realize now, was in

<sup>1</sup> "The war is won for us," said Hindenburg in July, 1917, "if we can withstand the enemy attacks on land until the submarine has done its work."

<sup>2</sup> Under the convoy system the merchant ships were kept in large groups and protected as far as possible by destroyers. For destroyers, because they could attack submarines by ramming or by depth charges or by torpedoes, whilst they themselves were immune from torpedo attacks by their lack of depth and by their quickness, were the most deadly enemies of the submarine. The headquarters of the convoy system were at a room at the Admiralty in London. Here was a huge chart covering the whole of one wall; and on it were little paper boats representing the exact position of the various convoys. There were also little circles showing, so far as was known, the exact location of each submarine. From London directions were "wireless" out to the convoys as to their course so as to avoid submarines. In this way the movements of some 10,000 ships were supervised in all parts of the world. "Mystery ships" were innocent-looking merchantmen which seemed to invite the torpedo; but when the submarine had fired its torpedo and came to the surface to secure papers and valuables, the ship suddenly revealed guns against which the submarine was helpless. "Sub-chasers" were small coastal motor-boats which could hear submarines 30 miles away by hydrophones and could then destroy them by depth charges. An enormous mine-field, 230 miles in length and 15 to 20 miles broad, was laid between Norway and the Shetlands chiefly by the Americans.



the submarine menace—if the submarine had succeeded, Great Britain must have been starved into submission. But other events of supreme importance occurred. One, as we have seen, was the entrance of the *United States* into the war in April—the black month for merchant ships. The other was the elimination of Russia from the war owing to the *Russian Revolution*.

The sufferings and losses of the Russians during the war had been appalling. Everything was lacking: rifles, guns, aeroplanes, food. The Russians had fought heroically and had made wonderful offensives, which, as we have seen, had helped to save their Western Allies at the Marne and at Verdun. But the huge forces became far too often simply fodder for the enemies' cannon. Discontent grew, and in March, 1917, food riots in Petrograd developed into revolution, and the Czar was forced to abdicate. For a time the moderate element in the Revolution Party was supreme and was loyal to the Allies. The Russian army even attempted another offensive in Galicia in July. But, as happens so often in revolutions, the power quickly passed to the extremists. Indiscipline soon spread to the army. The Russian offensive was checked, became a retreat, and soon ended in a rout. Before long there was no longer an organized front in Russia—the Germans could break in where they chose. The power in Russia passed to a most extreme party, the *Bolshevists*, under Lenin and Trotsky, who before the end of the year had made an armistice with the Germans. Soon after the opening of 1918 came the disastrous peace of *Brest-Litovsk* in which Russia lost all her western provinces, including Poland and the Baltic Provinces.

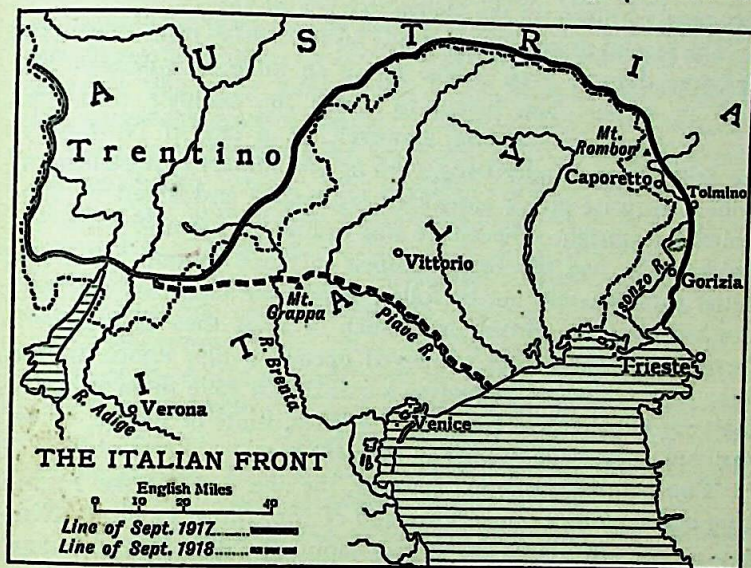
Meantime, in 1917, the war on the Western Front went on with unabated vigour. The Allies were on the offensive, whilst the Germans, relying on the submarine warfare, were on the defensive. At the beginning of the year the Germans made a big retreat on the Somme and retired to a stronger line, known as the Hindenburg line. In April the Canadians secured the *Vimy Ridge*, north of Arras, a position of great importance. But in the same month a great offensive by the French was a failure.<sup>1</sup>

For the rest of the year both British and French fought

<sup>1</sup> The French had hoped to secure Laon in the first day. Unfortunately the Germans



offensives with what were called "limited" objectives. Thus a very successful attack under General Plumer gave the British the *Messines Ridge*, to the south of Ypres. Then, from August to November came a campaign in the *Flanders* country north of Ypres. But the wetness of the weather, which converted the ground into a sea of mud, the consequent comparative failure



of the tanks, and the skilfully-constructed "pill-boxes"<sup>1</sup> of the enemy, made progress very slow, and *Passchendaele Ridge*—the main objective of the advance—was only secured after appalling casualties. Meantime the French made two offensives under General Pétain, their new Commander-in-Chief.

The Allies, before the year 1917 was out, had two great disappointments. In the first place, the Italians were attacked on the north-east front at *Caporetto* (Oct.). Six German divisions, which had been lent to the Austro-Hungarian

had captured two months earlier an order which referred to the great offensive. As to who was responsible for its failure is a great matter of controversy. But no failure was so dispiriting to the French nation and troops as this, and, as a consequence, there was, for a time, a mutinous spirit in some of the French regiments.

<sup>1</sup> They were oblongs of cement with various chambers inside, and slits through which machine-guns could be fired in all directions.



army, formed the spear-head. The Italians made a disastrous retreat, and found no halting-place till, after enormous losses, they got behind the River Piave, where British and French troops came to strengthen them, and where they successfully frustrated any further German advance. The enemy, as they had disposed of Serbia in the autumn of 1915 and of Roumania in 1916, had very nearly broken up the Italian defence in 1917.<sup>1</sup>

The second disappointment was on the British front. Hitherto for some days or even weeks before an intended offensive the artillery had begun to batter the enemy's positions.

Opposite *Cambrai*, however, on a day in November, the British forces under Byng, with no preliminary bombardment, made a surprise attack supported by tanks<sup>2</sup> and aided by fog, real and artificial. The attack was brilliantly successful—on no previous day had the British gained so much ground. But the initial success could not be followed up; the Germans counter-attacked, and the British lost much of what they had gained. Nevertheless the tactics employed opened a new epoch in the war. The Germans themselves admit that it gave them valuable hints for an offensive battle in the West, hints of which, as we shall see, they made full use in the next year.

Two notable successes, however, the one towards the beginning and the other towards the end of 1917, must be chronicled.

*Baghdad and Jerusalem.* In March the British captured *Baghdad*, and before the end of the year they had driven the enemy 100 miles north of this city. Then, in the last quarter of the year, General Allenby made his entry into *Jerusalem*. For the first time since 1187, Jerusalem was once again controlled by a

<sup>1</sup> The Austro-Italian battle-front was at this time in two salients: in the west in the Trentino, an Austrian salient or outward curve towards the Italian line; and in the east, an Italian salient or outward curve towards the Austrian line. The Germans and Austrians made a surprise attack at Caporetto, where the line was thinly held. The original break in the line was due to a German division, which in a dense mist marched up a road and got right behind a corps stationed in the heights above it. Besides territory and stores and munitions, the Italians lost in their retreat a quarter of a million prisoners and 1800 guns, and had, in addition, a quarter of a million casualties.

<sup>2</sup> Tanks are bullet-proof, armed mechanical vehicles, capable of crossing rough country and obstacles by means of caterpillar tracks. They were invented by the British and first used on the Somme in September, 1916. But Cambrai was the first battle where tanks were used in a surprise attack in the way suggested by their designers. At this battle, on a front of 13,000 yards, an advance of 12,000 yards was made in 12 hours—in the fighting just previously in the Ypres district such an advance had taken three months. In the second half of 1918 the tanks played a very large part in causing the downfall of the German armies.



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Christian country—and appropriately enough General Allenby made his entry less than a fortnight before Christmas Day.

By the beginning of the year 1918 it was quite clear that the submarine would not accomplish the downfall of Great Britain, and with her of her Allies. The Germans, therefore, had to stake all on a big offensive in the West before the Americans were ready. With Russia disposed of they could bring across hundreds of thousands of men from the Eastern to the Western Front, and Ludendorff thought that the odds were three to one in his favour. Accordingly in five successive months the Germans made five offensives. 1918,  
German  
Offensives.

The first two offensives, in March and in April, fell chiefly on the British troops. One of them, made on the Allied lines in front of Cambrai and St. Quentin, resulted in the loss of all the Allied gains on the Somme in the previous two years, and at one time threatened to result also in the loss of Amiens, the great railway junction and nodal point of our communications.<sup>1</sup> The other, on the Ypres front, lost all the gains of the Allies so hardly won in 1917, including the Messines and Passchendaele ridges, and made Ypres a more pronounced salient than ever.<sup>2</sup> These two offensives cost the British alone nearly 400,000 in killed and wounded besides 80,000 prisoners and enormous losses of stores and war material. Amiens and  
Ypres.

The next three offensives, in May, June, and July, fell mainly upon the French. The first of them, made between Soissons and Reims, got the Germans once more to the Marne and within 40 miles of Paris. The last of them—begun on July 15th—was made on both sides of Reims. This achieved little success on one side; on the other it was an entire failure, owing to the new tactics of the French, who had their front line lightly held with machine-guns, and had their real defensive position some

<sup>1</sup> The Germans held for part of one day the village of Villers-Bretonneux, from which they could command Amiens. Hindenburg writes in his memoirs: "We ought to have shouted in the ear of every single man 'Press on to Amiens! put in your last ounce. Perhaps Amiens means decisive victory. Capture Villers-Bretonneux whatever happens, so that from its height we can command Amiens with masses of our heavy artillery.' It was all in vain; our strength was exhausted."

<sup>2</sup> It was on the fourth and most critical day of the attack that Haig, the British Commander-in-Chief of the British forces on the Western Front, issued his historic order of the day: "There is no other course open to us but to fight it out. . . . Every position must be held to the last man. With our backs to the wall and believing in the justice of our cause, each one of us must fight on to the end."



way back. The Germans rushed over the first position only to find themselves a prey to the French artillery defending the second.

This was destined to be the last German offensive. The Germans had won brilliant tactical successes, but strategically they had failed. Amiens, Paris, and Reims were untaken—and the Allied spirit was still unconquerable.

On July the 18th began the great Allied offensive, which was not to stop till, 116 days later, the Germans, broken and dispirited, had to agree to all the demands of the Allies.

1918,  
The Allied  
Offensive.

For this remarkable change of fortune many causes may be suggested. To begin with, the German military effort was almost spent. Moreover, the constant and growing pressure of the blockade of Germany by the Allied fleets was having its effect in wearing down to an ever-increasing extent the physical and moral power of resistance of the German army and people. Then, from the end of April, American troops began coming to Europe at the rate of 300,000 a month, and the numerical superiority of the Allies became greater and greater. And, as time went on, the Allies became increasingly superior in munitions. Again, at the end of March, General Foch<sup>1</sup> was appointed to co-ordinate the activities of the Allied forces on the Western Front, and soon afterwards became the Commander-in-Chief. "Nothing is so important in war," said Napoleon, "as an undivided command," and the Allies had at last secured it. And, along with an undivided command, the Allies had, at last, devised successful methods of attack—first, a very brief though violent preliminary bombardment, then a narrow deep penetration of the enemies' lines by infantry protected by tanks, which broke through the opposing wire, and preceded by an artillery "barrage" or wall of shells which slowly moved forward in front of the infantry. And these attacks

<sup>1</sup> Foch was a profound student of the history and art of war, and had been first professor and then commandant of the French Staff College. He had made his reputation at the first Battle of the Marne in 1914. In 1918 he was, though sixty-six years of age, quick and active in his movements. Plenty of gesture accompanied his remarks: two blows in the air with his fists, followed by two kicks, showed the fate destined for his enemies! "No victory is possible," he says in one of his books, "unless the commander be energetic, eager for responsibility and bold undertakings, and can impart to all the resolute will of seeing the thing through." Foch had all these qualities—and especially the last. One little remark shows his conception of the importance of "quick decision and instant action in battle". He never said, "A battle begins", but always, "A battle is off", as of horses starting in a race.



continued unceasingly but on different parts of the line. The situation of the enemy thus became, as Foch said, "infernal". The battle would begin in one part of the line, and the enemy send its reserves there; hardly had this been done when it began elsewhere, and then again in a third place. Yet all these attacks were co-ordinated for a common end.

The first of the Allied offensives began on *July 18th*. The Germans in their advance to the Marne had made a great salient or bulge in their line. Foch attacked this bulge on its western flank, and the Germans suffered great losses in escaping from the salient. With this success the initiative passed definitely to the Allies. The River Marne, which had been fatal to German ambitions in 1914, was thus again fatal to them four years later in 1918.

Allied  
Successes.

The second great offensive on *August 8th* was a Franco-British one to clear the Paris-Amiens line, and to enlarge the field of battle north and south. The British Fourth Army, after a brief but intense bombardment by no less than 2000 guns, attacked on both sides of the *Villers-Bretonneux road*, the Australians on one side and Canadians on the other, led by over 450 tanks, and helped by real and artificial fog, and it got seven miles on the first day. The French also made a great advance. August 8th was, in the words of Ludendorff, "the black day" for the German army in the history of the war; and it was on this day that he came to the conclusion that the war must be ended.<sup>1</sup> The attack which began on August 8th was followed by various other attacks, now in one section, now in another, by French and Belgian, American and British forces; the Hindenburg line was pierced, the Ypres Salient was cleared, the Argonne forest was captured, and everywhere on the long front the Germans had to give way.

But meantime, in the second half of September, the Allies had achieved decisive successes elsewhere. First came a battle on the Salonika front, where combined operations, first of the Serbs and French, and then of the British and Greeks, broke through the Bulgarian defences. Within ten

Bulgaria's  
Fall, 1918.

<sup>1</sup> "This was the worst of the experiences," says Ludendorff, "that I had to go through. Six or seven divisions, which could certainly be described as battle-worthy, had been completely broken. The losses of the enemy, on the other hand, were extremely small."



days Bulgaria petitioned for an armistice, and within fifteen she had surrendered—the most startling change in the whole history of the war. As a result, Serbia was recovered, Bulgaria was occupied by the Allies, and the German communications with Turkey were finally and completely broken.

Almost at the same time came a brilliant offensive by Allenby in *Palestine*—an offensive largely conducted by Indian troops. After the British capture of Jerusalem, the opposing Turkey's lines ran from the sea-coast, just north of Joppa east Fall, 1918. to just north of Jericho. Allenby's infantry broke through the Turkish lines by the coast; then the cavalry burst through the gap, rode some forty miles, and cut off the retreat of two Turkish armies, whilst the air-forces bombed with deadly effect the road through which part of the Turkish armies was trying to retire. Meantime, on the other side of the Jordan, the Arabs, who were allied with us, "mopped up" any Turks that escaped east. The Battles of Megiddo, as they are called, were rapidly followed up; and in another month Allenby had reached Aleppo and the junction of the railway to Mesopotamia. By the end of October, Turkey had asked for an armistice, and was out of the war.

The third success came in *Italy*. In June the Austrians had tried a great offensive across the Piave, but though successful at first, they had been completely repulsed. Then, in Austria's Fall, 1918. October, the Italians, with some aid from the British and the French, took the offensive. They won the battle of Vittorio Veneto, and split the Austro-Hungarian army in two. The retreat of that army soon became a rout. Revolutions then broke out in various parts of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, and by November Austria-Hungary had ceased to be a factor in the war.

Meantime, the Germans on the Western Front had been given no rest, and continuous gains were made in every sector. The Germans were thus in a hopeless position. Ludendorff resigned, and the Germans petitioned for an Germany's armistice, which was granted on severe terms. At 11 a.m. on Fall, 1918. November 11 the armistice came into operation. The 100 days' offensive was over, and had ended in the most triumphant success.<sup>1</sup> Two days before it ended, in consequence of a re-

<sup>1</sup> By the time of the armistice the Belgians had arrived at Ghent, the British at Mons,



volutionary movement which started in the navy, the German Kaiser sought protection from his own subjects by a flight to Holland; and with his flight came the fall of all the other ruling princes in Germany.

But we have not yet exhausted all the fields of war, for during the four years all the German colonies and outposts were captured. In the Far East, in 1914, the Japanese, together with some British troops, took Tsingtau (Kiao-Chau), <sup>German Colonies.</sup> the German trading port in China; and Australians and New Zealanders seized the German islands in the Pacific. In Africa, the French and British took the Cameroons in 1914, whilst the South Africans took German South-West Africa in 1915. But in East Africa the Germans held out with great pertinacity against the British and South Africans, and not till towards the end of 1917 did German East Africa finally fall to the Allies.

The war was over. It had cost the European nations thousands of millions of pounds, and it left a long ribbon of completely devastated country from the sea to Verdun. But the most tragic feature of the war was the loss to Europe of the best of her manhood, and the misery and unhappiness that that loss brought to millions of homes.<sup>1</sup>

where they began the war, the French at Mézières, and the Americans at Sedan. The British Empire forces had alone, in the three months of fighting, taken on the Western Front 187,000 prisoners, 2850 guns, 29,000 machine-guns; and altogether the number was 385,000 prisoners and 6600 guns. At the beginning of the offensive, on July 15, 1918, the Germans had 80 divisions in reserve; at the armistice they had only 15 to throw into the line, whilst the Allies had 100.

<sup>1</sup> The war cost 50,000 million pounds and led to the enlisting of 50 millions of armed men; there were 30 million casualties and not far short of 9 million deaths. In France alone 21,000 factories, 630,000 houses, and 1659 townships were completely destroyed. The National Debt of France was in 1914 before the war 25 billion francs—in 1921 it was 302 billion francs. The National Debt of Great Britain was in 1914 before the war £708 millions—it was in 1919 £7435 millions.



## Summary of World War, 1914-8

B = Battle. C = Capture (Allied success). F = Fall (Allied loss).  
O = Offensive. P = Peace.

Western Front.	Eastern Front.	Maritime and extra-European.
1914. F. of Liège (Aug. 7.) B. of Marne (Sept.). Race to sea (Sept. to Nov.)	B. of Tannenberg (Aug.) <i>Turkey enters war</i> (Oct.) Russian Galician O. (Dec. to April).	B. of Falkland Isles (Dec.).
1915. <i>Italy joins Allies</i> (May).	German O. against Russia (April to Sept.). Gallipoli Expedition (April to Dec.). <i>Bulgaria enters war</i> (Oct.). Serbian overthrow (Oct.)	B. off Dogger Bank (Jan.). <i>Lusitania</i> sunk (May).
1916. German O. at Verdun (Feb. to June). Somme O. (July to Nov.). Italian Isonzo O. (Aug. to Nov.).	Russian O. in south (June) German O. in Roumania (Oct. to Dec.).	F. of Kut (April). B. of Jutland (May).
1917. German Somme retreat (Feb.). <i>U.S.A. joins Allies</i> (April). Flanders O. (Aug. to Nov.). Caporetto disaster (Oct.). B. of Cambrai (Nov.).	Russian Revolution begins (March). Bolshevists supreme (Nov.)	Unrestricted submarine warfare begins (Jan.). C. of Bagdad (March). The "Black Month" (April). C. of Jerusalem (Dec.). Conquest of German East Africa completed (Dec.).
1918. German O. for Amiens, Channel Ports, Reims, and Paris (March to July). Foch Commander - in-Chief (April). Allies' 100 days' O. (July to Nov.). Italian O. (Oct.). German armistice (Nov.).	P. of Brest-Litovsk (March). B. of Vardar and Bulgaria yields (Sept.). Turkish armistice (Oct.).	Allenby's Palestine O. (Sept.).

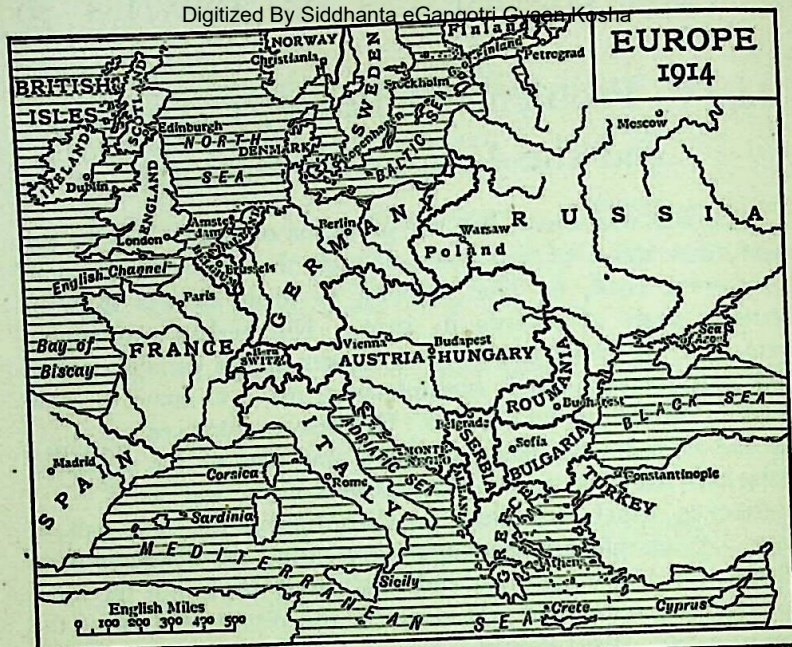


# LIV. Problems of Peace, 1918-32, and the League of Nations

The war was over. But the problems of peace were no less great than those of war; and though the armistice came in November, 1918, no final solution to them all was in sight fourteen years afterwards in 1932. Numberless conferences were held, in which the political leaders of the various nations took part, and at which attempts were made to come to some decision on the points at issue. Of these conferences far the largest and most important was that of the The Paris Conference, 1919. victorious Allied and Associated powers in the war, a conference which was held in *Paris* during the first half of 1919. A few plenary meetings representing the delegates from all the Allied Powers, great and small, were held; but the main work of the settlement was done by the representatives of the five principal Allied Powers—France, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, and the United States. At first two representatives from each of these Powers composed what was called the “Council of Ten”; but even that number was found too large. Before long, the task of decision was confined to the “Big Four”: Clemenceau, the veteran Prime Minister of France; Wilson, the President of the United States; Mr. Lloyd George, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom; Orlando, Prime Minister of Italy. And when Orlando owing to a disagreement retired for a time, the work was carried on by the “Big Three”. Besides settling a host of other questions, the “Big Four” and the “Big Three” were mainly responsible for the most difficult task of all—the settling of the terms of peace with Germany, which, together with the written constitution of the League of Nations, was embodied in the Treaty of *Versailles* (1919). Subsequent conferences and discussions led to the Treaties of *Saint-Germain*, *Trianon*, and *Lausanne*, which settled for the time the problems in connection with the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and the Turkish Empire.

What was the general result of these treaties and of subsequent modifications of them? First, as to Europe. The main







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changes in the map of Europe were made at the expense of the *Austro-Hungarian Empire* which had been built up in the course of centuries by the Habsburg family. *Austria* and *Hungary* became two independent republics. The Kingdom of *Roumania* was more than doubled in area, her gains including, from Russia, Bessarabia, and, from Hungary, Transylvania. *Italy* obtained from the old Austria-Hungary the Trentino and Istria and Trieste. The Kingdom of *Yugoslavia* was created to include the Slav provinces, such as Croatia and Bosnia, which had been part of Austria-Hungary before the war, and the former states of Serbia and Montenegro. Farther north, the republic of *Czechoslovakia* was carved out of the old territories of Austria-Hungary, whilst *Poland*<sup>1</sup> was recreated and recovered the greater part of the territories she had had in the eighteenth century before the era of her Partitions.

*Germany*, besides giving up part of Poland that the Hohenzollerns had seized in the eighteenth century, had also to give up to France Alsace-Lorraine, which she had taken from her in 1871, and the north half of Slesvig, which she had taken from Denmark in 1864. She also had to agree to pay in Reparations, both in kind and money, some part of the huge destruction she had wrought on the Allied countries on land, by sea, and by air. Until she had paid what was due to the Allies, the left bank of the Rhine was put for a certain number of years in Allied occupation. Effective steps were taken to reduce her military capacity, at all events for a generation, to inflict another war upon Europe. Of the old Empire of *Russia*, part, as we have seen, went to Roumania and to Poland. In addition various republics fashioned themselves in the Baltic, such as Finland, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. The rest of the Russian Empire remained under Bolshevik rule.<sup>2</sup>

As to the territorial settlement outside Europe, the main problems arose out of the disposal of the German colonies and the territories that before the war had been controlled by the Turkish Empire. The system

The Peace Settlement.

German and Turkish Empires.

<sup>1</sup> The new Republic of Poland had not as large a territory as the old kingdom in the eighteenth century, before its partition by Russia, Prussia, and Austria. Its capital is Warsaw, and its chief port Danzig, which, however, was made a free town, though Poland is allowed special facilities there.

<sup>2</sup> The official name for it is the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics (U.S.S.R.).



of *mandates*—of domains administered by various European nations under the auspices of the League of Nations—was inaugurated. In Africa, part of the German colonies went to France, part to Belgium and Portugal, whilst the Union of South Africa was given German South-West Africa, and to Great Britain was assigned German East Africa (now Tanganyika), and a part of Togoland and the Cameroons. Of the German possessions in the Far East the Islands in the Pacific went to Japan, Australia, and New Zealand. Similarly, with regard to the Turkish possessions, whilst Asia Minor was left to the Turks, Syria came under the guardianship of France, and Palestine and Mesopotamia (or 'Iraq)<sup>1</sup> under that of Great Britain. Other parts of Turkish territories, like Arabia, became self-governing or independent.

The text of the treaty of Versailles begins with the Covenant of the League of Nations. Under this Covenant, as subsequently

League of Nations.

amended, five Great Powers (Great Britain, France, Italy, Germany, Japan) and nine other States—three elected each year for three years—form the *Council* of the League and meet three times a year. The *Assembly* consists of the nations comprising the League, and meets once a year at Geneva. In connection with the League, there is a permanent Court of International Justice at The Hague. Provision was made in the Covenant, not only for the settlement of disputes between Powers, but also for an economic boycott of any Power who acted in disregard of the wishes of the League. Moreover, the League was to secure fair and humane conditions of labour, and just treatment for natives, and to assist in the prevention of disease and other matters.

The League had a membership in 1932 of between fifty and sixty Nations, or some three-quarters of the Nations of the world, the most conspicuous non-members being Russia and the United States. The Meetings of the Council and the Assembly have given opportunities for the statesmen of the world to know one another and to learn to appreciate one another's point of view.<sup>2</sup> The Council has settled some of the disputes

<sup>1</sup> 'Iraq, in 1932, was admitted to the League of Nations and the mandate of Great Britain came to an end.

<sup>2</sup> Between 1924 and 1932 there were at each Assembly an average of from five to ten Prime Ministers, and fifteen to twenty Ministers for foreign affairs.



which might have led to wars, and the permanent Court at The Hague has adjudicated on others.<sup>1</sup> The League, through the agency of its Committees, has assisted in the financial reconstruction of various countries; has improved international transit and communications; has organized international action in matters of health; has tried to put an end to slavery; has further hindered the traffic in opium and other drugs; and has supervised the mandates granted to different countries. Its International Labour Organization has become the great clearing house of information for the conditions of labour and of production all over the world; and it has done much valuable work especially in regard to industrial hygiene, the regulation of hours of work, and the protection of women and children.

The Achievements  
of the League.

The League then has made a good beginning. Indeed, its mere creation and continued existence is "one of those facts which inevitably stand out as landmarks in the history of the world"; and, in the opinion of those best qualified to judge, it has, as the years progressed, definitely grown in strength. But, of course, it has by no means yet succeeded in solving all the World's problems that have arisen since the war. For instance, the Territorial Settlement after the war was made with the main intention of redividing Europe on the basis of what was called Self-Determination—of allowing people with a distinct culture or language or historical traditions to compose independent States. But even the settlement actually made did not give universal satisfaction. Some States, such as France and Czechoslovakia and Poland, were satisfied with the settlement, and, wanting the *status quo*, allied together to uphold it. Other States, such as Germany and Hungary and Bulgaria, were dissatisfied with it, and even in 1932 still sought its revision as and when opportunity offered. Moreover, the racial distribution of Europe is such that it is impossible to obtain clear-cut divisions of territory according to race; and thus, even after the post-war settlements, some 30 millions of people in Europe out of a total of some 400 millions were still racial minorities, and in some cases were oppressed

World  
Problems,  
1919-1932.

<sup>1</sup> For instance, the Council settled a dispute in 1920 between Sweden and Finland over the Åland Islands, one in 1924 between Great Britain and Turkey over the 'Iraq boundary, and one in 1925 between Greece and Bulgaria over a frontier incident.



and ill-treated by the racial majorities who controlled them. Again, whilst national and racial jealousies and animosities and ambitions remain as strong as they are, the reduction of armaments, as suggested in the Covenant of the League of Nations, is difficult to carry out. Great Britain and the United States and Japan came, indeed, to an agreement with regard to naval armaments. But certain nations were unwilling to effect any large reduction in land armaments unless they could get security and a guarantee that the post-war settlements would not be upset; and other nations were reluctant to give this guarantee.

Then the Reparations to be paid by Germany and the war debts between one country and another were the subject of endless discussion and arrangement in the years succeeding the war, and raised formidable problems.<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile in other parts of the world the situation was far from settled. Russia, for instance, avowedly had the intention ever after the triumph of the Bolsheviks of helping to upset, as and when opportunity offered, the economic and social system prevalent in western Europe; whilst in the Far East, Japan's economic necessities produced in 1932 a serious problem in Manchuria, from which she largely draws the raw material for her industries. Then the world economic depression which began, owing to a variety of causes, in the year 1929, presented problems of appalling magnitude. Finally, there loomed on the horizon the stupendous problems presented by the contact of the white and the coloured races and of their varying cultures and civilizations.

To two important agreements, however, making for international peace, reference should be made. In 1925, at the

<sup>1</sup> The Allies claimed in 1921, as reparations, £11,600 millions, and they were awarded by the Reparations Commission £6600 millions, an amount however cut down on various occasions later on. The total payments made by Germany for reparations and the cost of occupation of the Allied Armies in German territory amounted up to June 1931—when they ceased—to £1010 millions, this sum including deliveries in kind and cessions of State property. A good deal of the one thousand and ten millions was as a matter of fact paid by money borrowed by Germany from the United States and Great Britain. With regard to war debts, Great Britain borrowed from the United States some £960 millions, on which debt she has agreed to pay, in principal and interest, 33 millions to 38 millions a year (for 62 years). The other Allies borrowed from Great Britain some £1400 millions, on which debt it has been arranged that they shall only pay, in principal and in interest, £18½ millions a year for 62 years. The general result is that while Great Britain lent her Allies 50 per cent more than she borrowed from the United States, she will receive, if the present arrangements continue, from her Allies less than half the amount she must pay to the United States. In June 1931 there was a *moratorium* for a year on all war debts.



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Locarno Conference in which Sir Austen Chamberlain (on behalf of Great Britain), Briand (on behalf of France), and Stresemann (on behalf of Germany) played leading parts, five Powers (Germany, France, Belgium, Great Britain, and Italy) guaranteed the inviolability of the frontier between Germany and Belgium and between Germany and France; and the age-long dispute on the Rhine frontier seemed likely, therefore, to come to an end: In 1928 the Pact of Paris—or Kellogg Pact as it is sometimes called, after the American Secretary of State who initiated it—was drawn up, and subsequently accepted by the greater part of the States of the world, including Russia. Under this Pact, subject to various reservations and interpretations by different nations, recourse to war as an instrument of national policy was renounced, and the settlement or solution of all disputes between the contracting parties was never to be sought except by pacific means.

Locarno, 1925.

Kellogg Pact, 1928.

## LV. Great Britain and her Economic Position in the Twentieth Century

### I. Trade and Commerce

In the course of the nineteenth century the development of Science had played no small part in the industrial supremacy of Great Britain in the World. Indeed, the end of that century was for Great Britain one of great Industrial prosperity. In the year 1899, we are told, "trade and commerce flourished exceedingly. Employment was remarkably good throughout the year and the workmen shared substantially in the benefits of excellent trade". That prosperity continued during the earlier years of the twentieth century, and even as late as 1914 the Chancellor of the Exchequer could say in his Budget Speech that the trade of the past year had reached its highest point and unemployment its lowest.



But the position of Great Britain is, in the twentieth century, a peculiar one.<sup>1</sup> It is a small island and yet crowded with a population—according to the census of 1931—of some 46 millions of people (including Northern Ireland) of whom 80 per cent live in towns or urban districts. It has to import 60 per cent of its food and many other things upon which it relies to maintain its standard of living. It pays for these imports partly, of course; by its exports. But it also pays for them by what are called its “Invisible” exports; that is to say, by its profits from such things as its vast Shipping trade, the international activities of its Banking, Insurance, and other concerns mainly centred in the city of London, and its income from the Investments of its past savings abroad. In the years before the World War, it was reckoned that the value of the visible and invisible exports combined gave Great Britain a balance over the value of her imports of some £200 million a year, which she largely used in making further investments. But in the years following the World War, Great Britain had a diminishing volume of exports—as compared with 1913 they had diminished in volume in 1930 by no less than 32 per cent.

For that decrease a variety of causes may be put forward. For one thing nations had learnt to make an ever-increasing number of things for themselves, and under the stimulus of Nationalism had fostered their new industries by high protective tariffs. Then a large number of new industries in what are called luxury trades had come into being, and new processes owing to new discoveries had been developed in which Great Britain had no such start as she had in the nineteenth century. Moreover the dislocation of our export trade in the war stimulated competitive industries abroad to the permanent injury of our export industries. Again, particular industries were hit by particular things; cotton by the development of that industry in the East; coal by the substitution in a substantial degree of oil and hydro-electric power for steam power. Also, there were other troubles such as the disorganization of trade with China and India. Finally, beginning in 1929, there came what has been called the catastrophic fall in world prices. Apart from these causes, the question is often

Invisible  
Exports.

Declining  
Exports.

<sup>1</sup> See Macmillan Report of 1931.



raised as to how far Great Britain's decrease of exports has been due to the inefficiency of her employers or of her distributors or to the labour costs of her employed—but that is a controversial question on which there is a great difference of opinion.

The diminishing exports had two results. One was that Great Britain, by 1931, no longer had a balance in the value of her combined visible and invisible exports over her imports. Thanks largely to her invisible exports, she retained her Balance of Trade till 1930; but in 1931 she had an adverse balance of over 100 millions. This meant that Great Britain would be living in future on her capital unless she managed to improve her Balance of Trade.

## THE BALANCE OF TRADE, 1929-31

Invisible Exports	1929	1930	1931
	Millions £	Millions £	Millions £
Excess of Government receipts over payments from overseas, including reparations and war debts ..	24	19	16
Net National shipping income ..	130	105	80
Net income from Overseas investments ..	250	220	165
Net receipts from short interest and commissions, Banking, Insurance, &c. ..	65	55	30
Net receipts from other sources ..	15	15	10
	484	414	301
Visible Exports of merchandise, silver bullion and specie ..	848	666	459
	1332	1080	760
Visible Imports of merchandise, silver bullion, and specie ..	1229	1052	870
Total credit or debit balance ..	+103	+28	-110

Secondly, the diminishing exports, combined with the increasing use of machinery in every industry, led to a large and continuous amount of unemployment. The number of unemployed after the end of 1920 was never below a million, and in 1931 rose to nearly three million. In that latter year it was estimated to be unlikely

Unemployment.



to fall below  $2\frac{1}{2}$  millions in the immediate future. The national loss from the unemployment of a million people over a period of five years has been estimated at £1000 million; but, quite apart from that, the unhappiness and demoralization caused by it made unemployment a very serious National problem.

## 2. Public Social Services in the Twentieth Century

The mention of unemployment leads to another great feature of the twentieth century—the development of what are called the Public Social Services. These services were not, of course, unknown in past ages. The Poor Law began in the reign of Elizabeth. State Education for the great mass of the population began in 1871. But, in the twentieth century, by a whole series of Acts of Parliament, the Social Services were vastly extended, so that now it may be said that the State tends and looks after its citizens from the cradle to the grave. At birth the future citizen comes under a maternity and child welfare centre. Later, he<sup>1</sup> gets his education free of cost, successively at Infants', Junior, and Senior Schools, and also a medical examination twice during his school career; if he has fair brains, he can get a "free place" at a Secondary School; if he has good brains, he can obtain a State and a County as well as an Entrance Scholarship at a University. When he leaves School, he will find that, into whatever industry he enters, various Factory, Mine, and Merchant Shipping Acts, mainly passed, as we have seen, in the nineteenth century, control his conditions of work and his hours of labour, and that Employers' Liability Acts make his employer liable for any accident except that caused by his own carelessness. By various Insurance Acts passed in the twentieth century he is insured against ill-health and, in most industries, against unemployment. Various Housing Acts passed mainly since the war have enabled many working men and other citizens to have their dwelling-houses at uneconomic rents, rates and taxes making up the balance. Finally, the worker, at the age of 65, if he is in an

The State's  
Care of the  
Citizen.

<sup>1</sup> In this paragraph "he" includes "she" as well.



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insured industry, and at the age of 70 if he is not, becomes eligible for an Old Age Pension; and, if he dies whilst in an insured industry, pensions will be provided for his widow and children.

But, of course, the Social Services cost money as the appended table will show. More especially, the unexpected increase in the number of unemployed has affected the Unemployment Insurance Fund. When started in 1911 the idea was that, in certain industries, the State, the employer, and the employed, should contribute to a Fund out of which grants should be made. But gradually there were extensions so that in 1932 some 12 million workers were insured.<sup>1</sup> Then the large increase in the unemployed led to more money being taken out of the Fund than was put in. By 1930 the Fund was nearly £39 millions in debt, and in the summer of 1931 it was increasing its debt at the rate of one million pounds a week.

SOME SOCIAL SERVICES, 1890, 1911, 1929

	1890 Total Expenditure	1911 Total Expenditure	1929 Total Expenditure	1929 Raised by Rates and Taxes
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Old Age Pensions ..	—	7,300	37,500	37,500
Widows, Orphans and Old Age Contributory Pensions .. ..	—	—	26,400	4,000
Education ... ..	11,500	33,400	100,000	92,100
Housing .. .. .	242	888	35,500	15,300
Poor Relief .. ..	9,055	16,158	44,900	41,800
Unemployment Insurance	—	—	53,200	19,411
Health <sup>2</sup> .. .. .	542	2,200	49,900	10,400

<sup>1</sup> The main exceptions are those employed in agriculture, railways, and private domestic service.

<sup>2</sup> Health includes hospitals, treatment of disease, maternity and child welfare, National Health Insurance Acts.



# HOW THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT GOT ITS MONEY AT DIFFERENT TIMES

	About 200 Years Ago 1739	About 100 Years Ago 1830-1	End of Nineteenth Century	1931-2
<b>BY TAXES</b>	£	£	£	£
1. Customs and Excise ..	4,400,000	39,376,000	50,050,000	256,052,000
2. Stamps ..	150,000	7,500,000	7,630,000	17,070,000
3. Land-tax, &c.	1,000,000	?	770,000	850,000
4. Various Taxes	135,000	5,000,000	1,600,000	7,461,000
5. Property Tax and Income tax ..	—	—	18,000,000	287,367,000
6. Death Duties	—	—	11,400,000	65,000,000
7. Sur-tax ..	—	—	—	76,700,000
	5,685,000	—	—	710,500,000
<b>BY LAND, ETC.</b>				
8. Profits of Post Office ..	100,000*	1,500,000*	4,400,000*	11,500,000
9. Crown Lands	?	360,000	430,000	1,250,000
10. Miscellaneous	?	600,000*	2,500,000*	33,903,000
11. Receipts from Sundry Loans ..	—	—	—	13,810,000
<b>TOTAL .. ..</b>	—	54,000,000* (rather under)	97,000,000 (rather under)	770,963,000

## PRINCIPAL ITEMS OF EXPENDITURE

	£	£	£	£
Annual Charges for Debt ..	2,000,000	29,236,000	25,000,000	289,400,000†
Military, Naval, and Air ..	1,850,000	13,915,000	44,068,000	107,280,000
Civil List and Government (including Social Services)	950,000	8,000,000	26,000,000	352,774,000

\* Except in the last column, the amounts are sometimes only roughly given, and the totals at the bottom are consequently only approximate.

† This sum was reduced by about 23 millions a year as the result of the conversion in 1932 of the 5 per cent War Loan to 3½ per cent Loan.



### 3. National Expenditure and the Crisis of 1931

The condition of the Unemployment Fund was one of the things that brought about a financial and political crisis in 1931. The growth of National expenditure during the twentieth century had been enormous, even allowing for the difference in the purchasing power of money at the beginning of the century as compared with that after the war. Part of the growth was due to the Public Social Services just mentioned. A very large part, again, was due to the interest on the debts incurred in the World War. And a large part was due to the extension of government activities in all departments of State. But then in the late summer of 1931 came a crisis. The Balance of Trade, as shown in a previous section, was going decidedly against Great Britain. The Budget was unbalanced, and the condition of the Unemployment Insurance Fund was making it more unbalanced. The Crisis of 1931. The Germans were in the throes of a financial crisis and were unable to pay back British banks what they owed. Foreigners, who had left very large sums of money in Great Britain as the safest place in the world, became alarmed and began to ask for their money back. The Bank of England and the other British banks were only able to meet the crisis for the moment by borrowing from France and the United States. And this financial crisis brought about a political crisis. (See p. 764.)

### 4. Politics and Parties in Great Britain since the World War

The British Parliamentary system—the system of Ministries dependent for their power on the votes of a Parliament democratically elected—seemed to many observers in the latter part of the nineteenth century to be likely to become almost universal throughout the world. But in the twentieth century it did not fare so well. After the World War Russia and Italy and Poland



came to prefer various forms of Dictatorship; Germany tried a Parliamentary system and found it none too suitable. Great Britain, however, remained faithful to it; indeed, she still further extended the democratic system partly in 1911 by muzzling the House of Lords, and partly in 1918 by extending the franchise to women.

From 1908 to 1916, as we have already seen, Asquith was Prime Minister. Then from 1916 to 1922 Mr. Lloyd George was Prime Minister, and his Ministry had to deal with the problems of the last two years of the World War and of the first three years of peace. The Ministry of Mr. Lloyd George had been a Coalition Ministry. But on its fall, the three main parties re-emerged—the Conservatives, the Liberals, and the Labour party. The Labour party is a product of the twentieth century. In 1900 there were but two Labour members. But in the election of 1922 they obtained 142 seats, a number increased to 287 seats in 1929 when they polled over 8 million votes.

On Mr. Lloyd George's fall, there were three short Ministries, two Conservative and one Labour. Then from 1924 to 1929 Mr. Baldwin was Prime Minister with a clear Conservative majority in the House of Commons over the other two parties. From 1929 to 1931 Mr. Ramsay MacDonald and the Labour party were in office. They had a small majority over the Conservatives in the House of Commons, but the Liberals held the balance as between Conservatives and Labour.

It was Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's Ministry that had to meet the economic crisis of the late summer of 1931. It could not, however, agree on the methods to be employed in restoring financial equilibrium and the Balance of Trade, and as a result it resigned. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald was then commissioned by the King to undertake the formation of a National Government; and his Government as finally formed consisted partly of those of his former colleagues such as Lord Snowden and Mr. Thomas who were in agreement with him, partly of Conservatives such as Mr. Baldwin and Mr. Neville Chamberlain, and partly of Liberals such as Sir John Simon and Mr. Runciman. In the General Election which ensued the National Government obtained overwhelming sup-

The National Government, 1931.



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port from the country, and secured a majority of nearly 500 in the House of Commons. This Ministry found itself faced by many difficult tasks, the chief of which were the balancing of the Budget by reducing expenditure and increasing taxation, the improvement of the Balance of Trade, and the problems presented by reparations and war debts, disarmament, and the world economic depression, and last but not least those presented by the British Empire.

One consequence of the economic crisis was that Great Britain, for a time at least, ceased to be a Free Trade country. Like the other countries of the world, she adopted in 1932 a system of tariffs and quotas with a view, The Ottawa Conference, 1932. if possible, to protecting and fostering her home industries. Another consequence was that an Imperial Economic Conference was held at Ottawa in the summer of 1932, and the National Government succeeded in making with the Dominions agreements with the object of fostering and increasing Trade within the Empire.

## 5. The British Empire after the World War

As in the nineteenth century so in the twentieth century the British Empire has grown in magnitude. In 1898 it had an area of some  $11\frac{1}{4}$  million square miles and a population of some 380 millions; in 1932 it had (including Mandates) an area of some  $13\frac{1}{2}$  million square miles and a population of nearly 450 millions—or a quarter of the population of the world. The British Empire—or as it is now called, the British Commonwealth of Nations—includes men of every colour—white, brown, yellow, black; and men of most varieties of religion—Christians and Buddhists, Hindus and Moslems, Jews and Parsis. It includes Self-governing Dominions; territories with semi-responsible government; territories with wholly elected or partly elected Assemblies or Legislative Councils; territories with no Assemblies or Legislative Councils; territories under chartered companies, and territories under international Mandates.

To only one or two of the post-war developments in that



Empire can reference be made here. The Self-governing Dominions, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, The Dominions. Newfoundland, and the Irish Free State gave the most splendid assistance to Great Britain and her allies during the World War. After the war events moved fast. Each of the Self-governing Dominions became a separate member of the League of Nations. Each of them signed the Treaty of Versailles and refused to sign the Treaty of Locarno, and therefore acquired the right of agreeing or not agreeing to treaties, and of deciding for themselves the issues of foreign policy. Then at the Imperial Conference in 1926 came the historic pronouncement agreed to by Great Britain and the Dominions. "They (namely Great Britain and the Dominions) are autonomous communities within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown, and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations." Finally there came in 1931 the Statute of Westminster which tried to put the pronouncement of 1926 into legal terms, swept away what was left of the British Government's power in connection with the Dominions, and left the ties of Empire to be those based, as has been said, on "tradition, goodwill, and good sense". In the preamble to the Bill the Crown, it is interesting to observe, was stated to be the "symbol of the free association of the members of the British Commonwealth of Nations", and in consequence "any alteration in the law touching the succession to the Throne or the Royal Style and Titles should hereafter require the assent as well of the Parliaments of all the Dominions as of the Parliament of the United Kingdom".

Meantime in various parts of the Empire there was a good deal of unrest. Ireland at the beginning of the war had provided many recruits for the Allied cause. But others in Ireland favoured the Germans, and in 1916 there was a rebellion, which was, however, put down without much difficulty. A new party, the *Sinn Feiners* ("Ourselves alone"), then arose in Ireland who demanded complete independence. They would not accept a new Home Rule Bill (1920) which divided Ireland into two provinces, with provision for their



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eventual union if desired. They began a series of murderous attacks on police and soldiers, which led to reprisals, and the condition of Ireland quickly got worse and worse. Then in 1921 an Anglo-Irish Treaty was made and confirmed by the British Parliament and the Dail, under which Ireland—called the Irish Free State—was given the political status of the Dominion of Canada, with liberty, however, to the Ulster Parliament to exclude Ulster from the measure. Certain harbour and other facilities were reserved to Great Britain, as well as provision for further facilities in time of war. Ulster (Northern Ireland) did decide to be excluded from the measure, and boundaries were then adjusted as between the two portions of Ireland. The Irish Free State started with no National Debt, with excellent railways and roads, a good supply of schools and public buildings, and a rich agricultural community which had made great profits during the war. Under Mr. Cosgrave it had nine years of peaceful government. But the old feeling against Great Britain still existed in many quarters, and, with Mr. Cosgrave's fall in 1932, and the coming into power of Mr. de Valera, leader of the Republican party, seemed not unlikely to lead to a recrudescence of difficulties between Great Britain and Ireland.

Then there was unrest in Egypt. Great Britain, in 1914, had declared a protectorate over that country. But as a result of the feeling in Egypt, the protectorate terminated in 1922; and Egypt, subject to certain reservations on the part of Great Britain with regard, for instance, to the security and the maintenance of the communications of the British Empire in Egypt and the defence of Egypt against all foreign aggression or interference, direct or indirect, became an independent sovereign State.

Meantime important developments occurred in India. Indian troops and the Indian people had assisted Great Britain in the war, and in the course of 1917 a fateful pronouncement was made of Great Britain's policy in regard to India. "The policy of His Majesty's Government," it was announced, "is that of the increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration, and the gradual development of self-governing institutions, with a view to the progressive reali-



zation of responsible Government in India as an integral part of the British Empire." How and by what stages that pronouncement can best be carried into effect has occupied the attention of British and Indian statesmen ever since it was made. First of all, in 1919, came the Government of India Act. This provided for a Council of State and a Legislative Assembly representing all India and gave them a large measure of control both as regards legislation and finance. Then in the provinces there was a system of what is called *dyarchy*. In each province there was a Legislative Council and Ministers, who were chosen by the Governor from this Council, and were directly responsible to it for the administration of certain subjects. Other subjects continued, however, to remain under the control of the Governor and his Executive Council. But unrest still continued, with Gandhi as the chief exponent of the policy of immediate self-government for India. In 1932 one of the tasks facing the National Government was to decide what steps should be taken in the direction of the Federation of All-India which received the approval of a Round Table Conference representing both India and Great Britain in 1931, and of giving self-government both to the central and provincial Assemblies. The problem Great Britain had to face in these distant lands was how to combine self-government with good government, and how to secure that under so-called self-government the weaker and more illiterate classes should receive due consideration.

## LVI. The Development of Science in the Twentieth Century

At the end of the nineteenth century the world was still in the main a pre-motor-car, pre-flying, pre-cinema, pre-broadcasting, pre-X-ray era; but before a third of the century was over, all these and many other developments of science had influenced the life of the great mass of the population. We can only give a few examples.



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The Fight  
against  
Disease.

First, we will refer to the fight against Disease. In 1885 Pasteur in Paris had made his first attempt to save a human life by inoculation against hydrophobia. So little progress had, however, been made by the end of the nineteenth century of the use of inoculation that in the South African War more soldiers died of typhoid than of the result of wounds in battle. Yet in 1914 to 1918, and in spite of the condition of the trenches compared with the African veld, the relative proportion of deaths by typhoid and by battle loss was about 1 to 50. Then in 1897-9 Ronald Ross and others explained how malaria was carried from man to man by a certain mosquito, and as a consequence in a few years many a previous white man's grave had been made a livable place, and, amongst other things, the building of the Panama Canal was made possible. Another medical triumph was that of 1922 when a substance, "Insulin", was extracted from the pancreas of sheep or oxen, which when inoculated into a patient, controlled the percentage of sugar in the blood and so relieved the deadly disease of diabetes. In 1895 the discovery was made that the Radiation from a vacuum tube could act upon a photographic plate even though the latter was enclosed in its wooden case. As a consequence, in the twentieth century the shadow-graphs of the now famous X-rays give the doctor and dentist invaluable knowledge of his patient's condition. As a result of these and other discoveries, the expectation of human life has been considerably increased.<sup>1</sup>

But the scientist has fought not only against disease in human beings but also against disease in animals and plants. We can only give one example. In 1884 there died an Austrian monk named Gregor Mendel who had made most notable observations on the results of crossing sweet peas. But it was not until 1904, at the time of the meeting of the British Association at Cambridge, that universal interest was aroused by the discussion of his almost forgotten notes. The theories of heredity put forward by Mendel have yielded notable results in the hands of skilled manipulators. Among other breeding successes is the production of a wheat that is practically resistant to rust, a disease which used to be answerable for the loss of 10 per

<sup>1</sup> In England and Wales, the expectation of life at birth for males was in 1871 forty years, in 1901 forty-five years, in 1921 fifty-five years; at the age of thirty-five it was twenty-eight years in 1871, and thirty-three years in 1921.



cent of all the wheat in England. Another example is the raising of the sugar content of beet from 5 to 20 per cent. When the Laws of Heredity are more fully understood the future will be bright with great possibilities for mankind.

We may turn to methods of communication. The force of an explosion of petrol vapour and air drives the piston of the internal-combustion engine. In 1895 there

**Communications.**

were five cars registered in the United States of America as being driven by this and other means; in 1928 there were nearly 25 million cars in the United States, nearly all of which were driven by the internal-combustion engine. Then in 1896 a small model aeroplane was fitted with a half horse-power steam engine and sent flying over the Potomac. Nine years later, in 1905, the Wright brothers in America fitted one with a petrol engine and flew  $24\frac{1}{2}$  miles. They improved on this in France in 1908, and two years later Farman, a Frenchman, of English descent, flew with only one stop from London to Manchester. Again, in the year 1896 Marconi, then a young man of 22, took out a first patent for sending messages by electric waves without the use of wires. The rate of development of wireless was phenomenal, for in the last month of the first year of the new century, messages were sent and received between Cornwall and Newfoundland, and by 1921 men could converse by wireless telephone between England and Australia. And then, besides Broadcasting, there has come in the twentieth century the development of the Gramophone and the creation of the Cinema which have added much to the pleasures and interests of the great masses of the population.

The contrast with the nineteenth century is well seen in country life. In hundreds of villages to-day the labour of the cottager's wife is relieved by the use of electricity in the place of oil lamps, while the cooking and sometimes the heating is done without the use of coal. The gramophone is cheap and together with the wireless has brightened the winter evenings. Before the internal-combustion engine, even large villages had but a slow horse bus once or twice a day, but now the motor passes through every hour or so to the nearest town. Owing to advances in chemistry the medicines are cheaper and better, and the clothes too are cheaper. In

**Country Life.**



fact, villages to-day are seeing in the present century what amounts to a revolution in their ways and habits of life. But whether the results of all the changes caused by science are wholly for the good, either in town or country, is a matter on which not all are agreed.







# CHIEF EVENTS, 55 B.C.-A.D. 1300.

B.C. Digitized By Siddhanta Gangotri Gyaan Kosha

55. First Landing of Julius Caesar.
54. Second Landing of Julius Caesar.
- A.D.
43. Aulus Plautius conquers South Britain.
- 78-85. Britain under Agricola.
84. Battle of Mons Graupius.
120. Hadrian's Wall built from the Solway Firth to the mouth of the Tyne.
140. The wall of Lollius Urbicus between Forth and Clyde.
180. Romans abandon North Britain.
208. Severus in North Britain.
368. Theodosius in North Britain.
- c.400. St. Ninian preaching in Scotland.
410. Romans leave Britain.
449. English Conquest of South Britain began with the landing of the Jutes under Hengist and Horsa in Kent.
- c.500. Scots from Ireland settle in Dalriada.
547. Angles settle in Bernicia.
563. St. Columba lands in Iona.
577. Battle of Deorham.
597. Introduction of Christianity into Kent by Augustine. Death of St. Columba.
613. Battle of Chester. English conquest completed.
633. Edwin defeated at Heathfield.
655. Penda defeated at Winwaedfield.
664. Synod of Whitby.
668. Theodore of Tarsus, Archbishop of Canterbury.
685. Battle of Nectansmere.
789. First Invasion of the Northmen.
825. Battle of Ellandune.
827. Egbert, King of the West Saxons since 802, became king of the English south of the Thames, and overlord of all the English as far as the Firth of Forth.
844. Union of the Picts and Scots under Kenneth MacAlpine.
860. Winchester sacked by Danes.
871. Accession of Alfred the Great; Battles of Ashdown, Basing, Marden, and Wilton.
- 875-900. Norse settlements in Hebrides.
878. Northmen, under Guthrum, invaded Wessex; Alfred retreated to Athelney, Battle of Ethandun; Treaty of Wedmore.
- 900 (or 901). Death of Alfred.
- 900-942. Reign of Constantine III in Alban.
- 910-926. Reconquest of the Danelaw.
937. Battle of Brunanburgh.
994. Invasion of Danes and Norsemen.
1002. Massacre of Danes on St. Brice's Day.
- 1005-1034. Reign of Malcolm II in Alban.
1009. Invasion of Sweyn.
1013. Death of Sweyn.
1016. Death of Ethelred. Conquest of England by Canute.
1017. Canute, king of all England.
1018. Battle of Carham.
1034. Accession of Duncan. Union of Alban and Strathclyde.
1035. Death of Canute.
1042. English line of kings restored in the person of Edward the Confessor.
1066. The Norman Conquest. Harold defeated Tostig at Stamford Bridge.
- Battle of Hastings. Harold killed. William accepted as king.
1072. Invasion of Scotland by William I.
1086. The "Oath of Salisbury". Completion of "Domesday Book".
1093. St. Anselm Archbishop of Canterbury.
1101. Invasion of England by Robert of Normandy.
1106. Battle of Tenchebrai. Annexation of the Duchy of Normandy.
1124. Accession of David I (married, about 1114, Matilda, heiress of Huntingdon and Northumberland).
1135. Death of Henry I. Accession of Stephen. Scottish Invasion of England.
1138. Battle of the Standard.
1139. Invasion of the Empress Matilda.
1148. Departure of Matilda from England.
1149. First Invasion of Henry Fitz Empress.
1153. Second Invasion of Henry Fitz Empress. Treaty of Wallingford.
1162. Thomas Becket elected Archbishop of Canterbury.
1164. The Constitutions of Clarendon.
1169. Expedition of Strongbow to Ireland.
1170. Murder of Archbishop Becket.
1171. Expedition of Henry II to Ireland.
- 1173-74. Last rebellion of the Norman Barons.
1174. William the Lion captured near Alnwick; set free by Treaty of Falaise and did homage for Scotland.
1189. Richard I annuls the Treaty of Falaise.
1190. Richard joins the Third Crusade.
1192. Imprisonment of Richard I.
1194. Return of Richard to England.
1204. Loss of Normandy.
1207. England under Papal Interdict.
1214. Battle of Bouvines.
1215. The Great Charter sealed by King John at Runnymede.
1257. Simon de Montfort assumed the leadership of the opposition to Henry III.
1258. The Mad Parliament drew up the Provisions of Oxford.
1263. The Battle of Largs.
1264. The Mise of Amiens. The barons victorious in the Battle of Lewes.
1267. Representatives from boroughs and cities summoned for the first time to Parliament; Battle of Evesham; death of Simon de Montfort.
1278. "Quo Warranto" Inquiry.
1279. Statute of Mortmain.
- 1282-84. Conquest of Wales.
1286. Death of Alexander III. Accession of the "Maid of Norway".
1290. Statute of "Quia Emptores". Treaty of Birgham. Death of the Maid.
1292. Assertion by Edward I of a claim to be Lord Paramount of Scotland. John Balliol becomes vassal-king.
1295. The "Model Parliament". Balliol repudiates English Overlordship.
1296. Invasion and annexation of Scotland: Massacre at Berwick and Battle of Dunbar. Balliol dethroned.
1297. Rise of William Wallace: Battle of Stirling Bridge: Guardianship of Wallace.
1298. Battle of Falkirk.



# CHIEF EVENTS, 1300-1500

Dates.	Sovereign.	Foreign Politics.	Social and Religious.	Lancaster and York.	Scotland.
1300	Edward II, 1307.	Philip VI, 1328. Hundred Years War (1st part: Plantagenet). Battle of Sluys, 1349. Battle of Crécy, 1346. Battle of Poitiers, 1356. Treaty of Bretigny, 1360. Battle of Navarene, 1367. First Period of Decline.	Black Death, 1349. Statutes of Labourers. Wyclif and John of Gaunt. Good Parliament, 1376. Peasant Revolt, 1381. The Lollards.	Semi-royal Families. Battle of Boroughbridge. Death of Thomas of Lancaster, 1322.	Execution of Wallace, 1305. Robert Bruce, 1306. Battle of Bannockburn, 1314. Treaty of Northampton, 1328. Death of Robert Bruce. Ab- dication of David II, 1329. Battle of Dupplin, 1332. Battle of Halidon Hill, 1333. Battle of Neville's Cross, 1366.
1350				John of Gaunt and House of Lancaster. The Lords Appellant, 1387. Death of John of Gaunt. Throne seized by Lancastrian, Henry IV, 1399.	Robert II, 1371. Robert III, 1390.
1375	Richard II, 1377. Henry IV, 1399.				



Dates.	Sovereign.	Foreign Politics.	Social and Religious.	Lancaster and York.	Scotland.
1400	Henry V, 1413.	Hundred Years War (and part: Lancaster), Burgundy and Armagnac. Murder of Duke of Orleans, 1407. Battle of Agincourt, 1415. Murder of Duke of Burgundy, 1419. Treaty of Troyes, 1420.	De Haereticis Comburendo, 1401.  Sir John Oldcastle, 1416.	The Percy-Mortimer Plot. Battle of Shrewsbury, 1405.  The Cambridge Plot (Mortimer-York), 1415.	Battle of Homildon, 1402. James I, 1406.
1425	Henry VI, 1422.	Joan of Arc. Second Period of Decline, 1428. End of Congress of Arras. End of Anglo-Burgundian Alliance, 1435.		Lancastrian quarrels: Bedford and Gloucester.	James II, 1437.
1450	Edward IV, 1461.	Battle of Châtillon, 1453. End of Hundred Years War.		Murder of Suffolk. Cade's Rebellion, 1450. Birth of King's Son, 1453. Battle of St. Albans, 1455. Battle of Wakefield, 1460. Battle of Towton, 1461. Quarrel of York and Neville. Battles of Barnet and Tewkesbury, 1471. Break-up of York's power. Battle of Bosworth, 1485. Battle of Stoke, 1487. Perkin Warbeck.	Fall of Black Douglas. Battle of Arkinholm, 1455. The Red Douglas. James III, 1460.
1475	Edward V, 1483. Richard III, 1483. Henry VII, 1485.	Charles VIII's Invasion of Italy, 1494. "The House of Habsburg."			Battle of Sauchieburn, 1488. James IV, 1488.
1500					



# CHIEF EVENTS, 1500-1600

Dates.	Sovereign.	Foreign and Political.	Social and Religious.	Scottish.
1500	Henry VIII, 1509.	Marriage of Prince Henry with Katherine of Aragon. Holy League, 1511. Wolsey. French Alliance, 1514. Death of Louis XII, 1515. Death of Ferdinand of Spain, 1516. Death of Maximilian, 1519. Charles V, Emperor. Battle of Pavia, 1525. Sack of Rome, 1527. Fall of Wolsey, 1529.	Luther, 1517.  Question of King's Divorce, 1528. Reformation Parliament, 1529-35. Act of Appeals, 1533. Act of Supremacy, 1534. Pilgrimage of Grace, 1536. Dissolution of the Greater Monasteries. The Six Articles, 1539. The Great Bible. Death of Cromwell, 1540. Somerset Protector. First Prayer Book. Rising in the West and Ket's Rebellion.	Battle of Flodden, 1513. Accession of James V.  Darnick Field (Melrose), 1526.  Battle of Solway Moss, 1542. Death of James V. Mary Queen of Scots. Execution of Wishart, 1545. Murder of Beaton, 1546. Battle of Pinkie, 1547.
1525				
	Edward VI, 1547.			



Dates.	Sovereign.	Foreign and Political.	Social and Religious.	Scotland.
1550	Mary, 1553. Elizabeth, 1558.	The Spanish March, 1554- Loss of Calais, 1558. Treaty of Câteau Cambrésis, 1559. Death of Henry II of France, 1560. Outbreak of Wars of Religion in France, 1562. Rebellion in the Netherlands.	Execution of Somerset. Northumberland in Power. Second Prayer Book, 1552. Wyatt's Rebellion. Reconciliation with Rome, 1554. The Persecution. Burning of Cranmer, 1556. The Religious Settlement, 1559.	Marriage of Mary and the Dauphin of France, 1558. The Lords of the Return of Knox. The Lords of the Congregation, 1559. Treaty of Leith, 1560. Return of Mary Queen of Scots, 1561. Marriage with Darnley, 1565. Murder of Rizzio, 1566. Murder of Darnley, 1567. Marriage of Mary and Bothwell. Battle of Langside, 1568. Mary's Flight to England.
1575		Period of Plots in England, 1568-87. Ridolfi, 1571. St. Bartholomew, 1572. Drake's Circumnavigation, 1577-81. Campion's Plot, 1581. Murder of William the Silent, 1584- Throckmorton's Plot. Babington's Plot, 1586. Cadiz, 1597. Execution of Mary. The Armada, 1588. Accession of Henry of Navarre, 1589. Richard Grenville, 1590. Edict of Nantes, 1598.	The Rising in the North, 1569.	Execution of Mary, 1587.
1600				



	England, Scotland, Ireland.	Dates.	Other Powers.	Dates.
James I.	Hampton Court Conference. Gunpowder Plot.	1604 1605	CHIEF EVENTS, 1603-88  Murder of Henry IV of France; Accession of Louis XIII.	1610
	Colonization of Virginia. Plantation of Ulster.	1607 1608		
	Dissolution of James I's First Parliament. Death of Cecil.	1610 1611 1612		
	Death of Shakespeare.	1616		
	The Five Articles of Perth; Execution of Raleigh.	1618		
	Sailing of the <i>Mayflower</i> .	1620		
	James's Third Parliament meets; fall of Bacon.	1621		
	Journey of Charles and Buckingham to Madrid.	1623 1624 1625		
	Marriage of Charles and Henrietta Maria.	1627		
	The Rhé Expedition. Petition of Right; Buckingham assassinated. Charles's 3rd Parliament dissolved; no Parliament for 11 yrs.	1628 1629 1629		
	Wentworth goes to Ireland; Laud Archbp. of Canterbury.	1632 1633		
	Hampden's Case; new Service Book in Scotland.	1637		
	Charles I.	First Bishops' War. Short Parliament; 2nd Bishops' War; Long Parliament. Stratford executed; Irish Rebellion; Grand Remonstrance. Beginning of Civil War.		
Battle of Marston Moor. Battles of Naseby and Philiphaugh.				
			Accession of Louis XIV; Mazarin, Chief Minister [(1643-61).]	



Commonwealth.	Second Civil War. Execution of Charles; Cromwell in Ireland. Battle of Dunbar. Battle of Worcester; Navigation Act. First Dutch War. First Protectorate Parliament. Capture of Jamaica. Second Protectorate Parliament. Blake at Santa Cruz. Capture of Dunkirk; Death of Cromwell. Clarendon, Chief Minister. Corporation Act. Acquisition of Bombay and Tangier.	1648 1649 1650 1651 1652 1654 1655 1656 1657 1658 1660 1661 1662 1665 1666 1667 . . . 1672 1673 1674 . . . 1678 1679 1681 1683 1685 . 1688	Treaty of Westphalia.	1648
Charles II.	Third Dutch War. Danby, Chief Minister. Death of Milton. The Popish Plot; fall of Danby. Habeas Corpus Act. Dissolution of Oxford Parliament. Monmouth's and Argyll's Rising. James Edward born; Trial of Bishops; William III arrives.	1672 1673 1674 . . . 1678 1679 1681 1683 1685 . 1688	William of Orange becomes Stadtholder in Holland.  Treaty of Nimwegen.  Death of Colbert. Revocation of Edict of Nantes. Louis XIV invades Germany.	1672 1673 1674 . . . 1678 1679 1681 1683 1685 . 1688
James II.				1688



# CHIEF EVENTS, 1689-1763

Sove- reign.	Prime Minister.	Great Britain.	Dates.	Other Powers.	Dates.
William III and Mary II.		Bill of Rights. Toleration Act.	1689	OR WAR OF LEAGUE OF AUGSBURG.	1708
		Death of Mary. Bank of England started.	1694		1709
		Partition Treaty.	1697 1698		1709
		Act of Settlement. Death of James II. Godolphin's Ministry.	1701 1702	Charles II of Spain dies. Prussia becomes a Kingdom, Frederick I.	1709
		Union with Scotland.		Death of Aurungzebe, Great Mogul.	1709
Anne.		Tory Ministry under Harley and St. John.	1710	Charles VI becomes Emperor.	1710
		Whig Ministry.	1713		
George I.		Septennial Act.	1714 1715 1716	Accession of Louis XV.	1715
		South Sea Bubble.	1717 1718	PASSARO.	1718
				Death of Charles XII of Sweden.	
			1720		



George I.	1721-42			1721	1725
	SIR ROBERT WALPOLE (Whig).			Death of Peter the Great.	
George II.				1727	
				1733	WAR OF POLISH SUCCESSION.
				1735	
				1737	
				1739	
				1740	Accession of Maria Theresa to Austria, and of Frederick the Great to Prussia.
				1742	
				1745	
				1748	
				1751	
				1754	
				1755	
				1756	
				1757	
				1759	
				1760	
				1762	
				1763	
					Catherine II reigns in Russia.



# CHIEF EVENTS, 1760-1815

Sovereign.	Prime Minister.	Great and Greater Britain.	Dates.	Foreign Powers.	Dates.
George III.	NEWCASTLE (with PITT). BUTE. GRENVILLE.	Bridgewater Canal.	1760 1761 1762 1763	WAR.	1760 1761 1762 1763
	ROCKINGHAM. CHATHAM. GRAFTON.	Battle of Buxar; Hargreave's Spinning Jenny. Stamp Act; Watt's Steam Engine. Stamp Act repealed. Cook's First Voyage to Australia.	1764 1765 1766 1767 1768		1764 1765 1766 1767 1768
	1770-82 LORD NORTH.	Warren Hastings Governor of India (till 1785). American Colonies declare Independence. Death of Chatham. Crompton's "Mule".	1770 1773 1775 1776	First Partition of Poland. Accession of Louis XVI.	1772 1794
	ROCKINGHAM. SHIELBURNE. PORTLAND.	Independence of Irish Parliament. Pitt's India Bill.	1778 1779 1780	France joins America. Spain joins France. Holland joins France.	1778 1779 1780
	1783-1801 PITT.	Trial of Warren Hastings.	1782 1783 1784	Death of Maria Theresa.	1780
			1788	Death of Frederick the Great.	1786



Sovereign.	Prime Minister.	Great and Greater Britain.	Dates.	Foreign Powers.	Dates.		
George III.	1783-1801	Formation of Upper and Lower Canada.	1791	French Revolution begins.	1789		
	PITT.	Suspension of Habeas Corpus Act.	1793	French Republic set up.	1792		
		IRISH REBELLION.	Death of Burke.	1795	Execution of Louis XVI.	1793	
			MARQUIS WELLESLEY GOVERNOR OF INDIA.	Union with Ireland.	1798	Rule of Directory in France.	1795
				ADDINGTON. PITT. GREENVILLE. PORTLAND. PERCEVAL.	FRENCH REVOLUTIONARY WAR.	Napoleon becomes First Consul.	1800
	Alexander I reigns in Russia.	1801					
	Napoleon proclaimed Emperor.	1803					
	End of Holy Roman Empire.	1804					
	1812-27 LIVERPOOL.	WAR WITH U.S.A.	PENINSULAR WAR. NAPOLEONIC	1806			
				1807			
1808							
			1812	Congress of Vienna.	1814		
			1814	Restoration of Louis XVIII.	1815		



# CHIEF EVENTS, 1815-1932

Sove- reign.	Prime Minister.	Great and Greater Britain.	Dates.	Other Powers.	Dates.
George III.	1812-27	Battle of Waterloo; Lord Hastings in India, 1814-23.	1815	Treaty of Paris; Louis XVIII King of France.	1815
	LIVERPOOL	Occupation of Singapore; Six Acts "	1819 1820 1821 1822	Revolutions in Spain and Naples. Death of Napoleon I.	1820 1820 1820
George IV.	CANNING. GODERICH. WELLINGTON.	Liverpool's Ministry re-constructed.	1827	Charles X becomes King of France. Nicholas becomes Czar.	1824 1825
	GREY.	Battle of Navarino.	1827	WAR OF GREEK INDEPENDENCE.	1827
William IV.	MELBOURNE. PEEL.	Catholic Emancipation Act. Manchester and Liverpool Railway.	1829 1830	Revolutions in France and Belgium; Louis Philippe King of the French.	1830 1830
	MELBOURNE.	First Reform Bill. Abolition of Slavery in British dominions. Reform of Poor-Law. Municipal Reform Act. South Australia Colonized; the "Great Trek". Rebellion in Canada. Lord Durham sent to Canada; <i>Great Western</i> crosses Atlantic.	1832 1833 1834 1835 1836 1837		
Queen Victoria.	1841-6 PEEL.	First Afghan War. New Zealand annexed; Penny Postage introduced. Chinese cede Hong-Kong.	1838 1839 1840 1841	Alliance against Mehemet Ali.	1840
		The Disruption in Scottish Church. Repeal of Corn Laws.	1843 1846	Spanish Marriage Question.	1846



Sovereign.	Prime Minister.	Great and Greater Britain.	Dates.	Other Powers.	Dates.
Queen Victoria.	1840-52 LORD JOHN RUSSELL.	Chartist Riots; Dalhousie Gov.-Gen. of India (till 1856); Second Sikh War; Anaesthetics introduced.	1848	The Year of Revolutions.	1848
	DERRY.	The Great Exhibition.	1851	Louis Napoleon's <i>coup d'état</i> .	1851
	ABERDEEN.		1852	Louis Napoleon becomes Emperor Napoleon III.	1852
	PALMERSTON.	CRIMEAN	1854	WAR.	1855
	DERRY.	INDIAN	1855	Alexander II becomes Czar.	1855
	PALMERSTON.	MUTINY.	1856		1856
		Second Chinese War.	1857	War of Italian Unity (1859-61).	1859
		Formation of Volunteers.	1858	AMERICAN CIVIL WAR.	1861
		Darwin's <i>Origin of Species</i> .	1859	Bismarck becomes Chief Minister in Prussia.	1862
		Death of Prince Consort.	1861	Austro-Prussian War.	1865
			1862		1866
	RUSSELL.	Dominion of Canada formed; Second Reform Bill.	1867	Opening of Suez Canal.	1869
	DERRY.	Irish Church Disestablished.	1868	Franco-Prussian War (1870-71); Republic in France;	1870
	1868-74	First Irish Land Act; Education Act.	1870	Formation of Empire of Germany.	1871
	GLADSTONE.		1874	The Bulgarian Atrocities.	1876
1874-80	DISRAELI.	Queen becomes Empress of India.	1876	Russo-Turkish War.	1877
		Second Afghan War.	1878	Treaty of Berlin.	1878
		Zulu War.	1879	Alexander III becomes Czar.	1881
1880-5	GLADSTONE.	First Boer War.	1880		1881
		Bombardment of Alexandria; Battle of Tel-el-Kebir.	1881		1881
		Third Reform Bill; "Grab for Africa" begins.	1882	The "Grab for Africa" begins.	1884
	SALISBURY.	Annexation of Upper Burma; Fall of Khartoum.	1884		1884
	GLADSTONE.	First Home Rule Bill.	1886		1886



# CHIEF EVENTS, 1815-1932 (Continued)

Sovereign.	Prime Minister.	Great and Greater Britain.	Dates.	Other Powers.	Dates.
Queen Victoria.	1886-92 SALISBURY.	Local Government Act.	1888	William II German Emperor.	1888
	1892-04 GLADSTONE.		.	Fall of Bismarck.	1890
	1894-95 ROSEBERY.		1892		1893
	1895-1902	The "Diamond Jubilee" of Queen Victoria. Re-conquest of Soudan.	.	Nicholas II becomes Czar.	1895
	SALISBURY.		1895		1896
Edward VII.	1902-05 BALFOUR.	Federation of Australia.	1897	Peace Conference at the Hague.	1899
	1905-08 CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN.	Anglo-French Agreement. Anglo-Japanese Treaty.	1898		1900
		Anglo-Russian Convention.	1899	Russo-Japanese War, 1904-5.	1901
	1908-16	Union of South Africa: Indian Councils Act.	1901		1902
	ASQUITH.	Parliament Act. Britain declares War on Germany.	1902		1903
George V.			1903	Portugal becomes Republic.	1904
			1904	Assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand. Germany declares War on Russia and France.	1905
			1905	Germany enters Belgium. Italy declares War on Austria.	1906
			1906	United States of America declares War on Germany. Russian Revolution.	1907
	1916-22 LLOYD GEORGE	Armistice. Representation of People and Education Acts. Peace Treaty signed. Government of India Act. Peace Treaty ratified. Irish Home Rule Act. Great Coal Strike.	1907		1908
			1908		1909
			1909		1910
			1910		1911
			1911		1912
			1912		1913
			1913		1914
			1914		1915
			1915		1916
			1916		1917
			1917		1918
			1918		1919
			1919		1920
			1920		1921
			1921		1922



Sovereign.	Prime Minister.	Great and Greater Britain.	Dates.	Other Powers.	Dates.
George V.	1922-23 BONAR LAW.	Irish Free State constituted.	1922 . . . .	Treaty of Lausanne.	1923 . . . .
	1923-24 BALDWIN.		1923 . . . .		
	1924 MACDONALD.	First Labour Government in United Kingdom.	1924 . . . .		
	1924-29 BALDWIN.	Locarno Pact signed. General Strike. Representation of the People Act.	1925 1926 1928 . . .	Germany admitted to League of Nations. Kellogg Pact signed.	1926 1928 . .
	1929-31 MACDONALD.	India Round Table Conference (First Session).	1930 . . .	Rhineland evacuated.	1929 . .
	1931- MACDONALD.	India Round Table Conference (Second Session). National Government formed. Imperial Economic Conference at Ottawa.	1931 1932	Spain becomes a Republic. World Economic Crisis.	1931 .







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The Commission will meet again  
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